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OR, A Race for a Ruthless Rogue.

BY ED. L. WHEELER,
AUTHOR OF "DENVER DOLL," AND "DEADWOOD DICK" NOVELS.

CHAPTER I.

A STRANGE CASE.

WHEN Deadwood Dick, prince of detectives, left New York to attend to his peculiar case in Buffalo, he did not close up his New York office, but left it in charge of a veteran detective whose acquaintance he had made through an introduction by Inspector Byrnes.

What this detective's real name was probably not one in ten was aware. He was known to the force as Old Grunt, and will carry the name

DICK COMPREHENDED, IN AN INSTANT. THE TRUTH. THE POOR GIRL WAS INDEED RELEASED FROM MONK'S CONTROL.

as long as he lives, which will not be long, as he is now nearing his seventies.

Despite his age, however, he is one of the shrewdest, slyest and craftiest ferrets in the profession.

He took a liking to Dick, and Dick to him, at sight, and thus it was that Dick left Old Grunt in charge of his headquarters when he went to Buffalo. Naturally enough, when Dick and Billy arrived back in Gotham, they went straight to the office, and found Old Grunt enjoying his grimy pipe.

He was an odd-looking character, to say the least. Having been through two wars, and innumerable fracases in his detective experience, his face and hands were literally covered with scars. He sported a beard, but the growth was never known to have got beyond a mere stubble.

His face seemed never to part with its surly expression, and he had a habit of grunting at the slightest incentive to excitement.

Yet, despite his sour aspect and grunts, the veteran had a sound heart in him, and was never known to go back on a friend.

When Dick and Billy entered the office he sprung to his feet with an exclamation of delight.

"Jumpin' Jerusha! are ye back, boys? Darn my socks, ef I ain't glad to see ye, an' both lookin' right peart, too!"

And thereto was a general hand-shaking.

"Looking, I dare say, better than we feel," Dick replied. "I, for my part, feel pretty tired. As I grow older, railroad travel don't seem to agree with me."

"As you grow older? Why, good gracious, me son, ye'r only a baby yet! Wait till ye'r as old as Old Grunt, and then ye kin talk!"

"Anything been doing since I've been gone?" asked Dick.

"No, not until a little while ago. Then a man came and wanted to see you. He had an important job for you, he said, which, if you were successful in accomplishin', would fetch ye in a fortune."

"Who was the man?"

"His name is Malcolm Edwards. Here is his card. He said he was in a great hurry, but I told him if he would wait a few hours you might be here, as ye was liable to return at any minnit."

"Who sent him?"

"Inspector Byrnes. It seems Byrnes has use for all of his trusted men just now, on account of the car strike."

"How long since did this gentleman call?"

"Not over an hour ago. He said he'd wait till toward evening."

"Well, I'll go and see him," Dick decided.

"Is he a man you know anything about?"

"Not personally. I have heard of him however. He spent most of his latter life in Brazil, where he is said ter hev accumulated an immense fortune, loomin' up inter the millions. On his return, he bought a house on Fifth avenue, where he has since resided. Little has been seen of him, however, as he has, with his daughter, and two cousins, led the life of a recluse."

"Well, I will go and pay him a visit. If we come to terms, will you remain in charge of the office?"

"Yes."

"O. K., then. Come, Billy. We will call on Mr. Malcolm Edwards."

So they took their departure, and to the residence of Mr. Edwards they then went.

It was evident that Mr. Edwards had prospered in Brazil, for he occupied a most elegant mansion, and the interior was furnished with the sumptuousness of lavish riches.

A wood fire burnt in the open fireplace, and before this Mr. Malcolm Edwards was seated, in an easy-chair.

He was a man of perhaps fifty years of age—not more. His hair and full flowing beard were quite gray, but his figure was robust, and his face genial.

He was well dressed, after a quiet fashion, and arose to meet his guests, pleasantly.

"Good-morning, gentlemen! Whom have I the honor of meeting?" he asked, placing a couple of chairs.

"My name is Bristol, and the lad, here, is my young assistant, William Bucket," Dick replied.

"You, I believe, are Mr. Malcolm Edwards?"

"I am. Of what service can I be to you, sir?"

"I am a detective, and my office attendant said you wanted to see me."

"I understand. You are Deadwood Dick?"

"Yes, sometimes so-called."

"Then you are indeed the very man I want to see," Mr. Edwards declared, heartily. "You were recommended to me by Inspector Byrnes,

who said you were one of the cleverest men in your profession. Are your services at liberty?"

"Well, yes. I have nothing to do in particular, just now."

"Then, I wish to engage your services. I have one detective on the job, already, but I am not at all sanguine of his success."

"What is his name?" Dick asked.

"It is Walter Steele. I want you to undertake a peculiar job, and a hard one, too, that will require you to exercise all your wits. If you succeed, I'll give a thousand dollars. Besides that, I will pay you and your companion each ten dollars a day and your traveling expenses. Is that fair?"

"Perfectly satisfactory," Dick responded.

"Now, then, what is the case in question?"

"Well, I'll tell you."

"Nearly all my life was spent in Brazil, either at stock-raising or in the diamond fields—mostly in the latter, where I accumulated a considerable fortune. Then I was seized with a yearning to come back here to my native country, and I came, accompanied by my daughter, Evelyn, au only child."

Evelyn was born and bred in Brazil, and received her education in Rio Janeiro. When she was only fifteen, a rich Brazilian, on her mother's side, died and left her a handsome fortune in her own right, to be paid to her in hand, without executors, or any other red-tape technicalities.

Now, this great windfall would have turned the head of many another girl, but it didn't that of my Evelyn. She simply put it away in her trunk, and said it should remain there until she should see a good chance to invest it. I did not worry a whit about it, for I knew my daughter was not rattle-headed, like most other girls."

"How much money did your daughter fall heir to?" Dick interrogated.

"A quarter of a million."

"Phew! big sum for a child, I should say."

"Well, yes. But I placed the most implicit trust in Evelyn, who had always been a loving and obedient daughter to me."

When Evelyn was seventeen, we came to New York and located in this house, which belongs to me. At eighteen she was permitted to enter society, and soon became a reigning belle. Her admirers were many, and her suitors not a few.

As for myself, I did not go into business, having plenty of money to carry me through life. I attended the races, ball-matches and theaters, joined a popular club, bought a steam-yacht, and sported about generally.

As a consequence, I was but little at home to look after my daughter.

Finally, a friend of mine hinted to me that I had better keep a weather eye out—that Evelyn seemed to be taking kindly to the attentions of a man of obscure parentage who, in some way, had managed to work his way into society, and was not supposed to be worth more than the dress-suit he wore. He was known as Mora Monk, and, it was whispered about that he was a mesmerist of rather extraordinary power.

Well, you may calculate that this set me to thinking, and I concluded to set aside some of my own pleasures, in order to look after the welfare of my child.

I inquired of my friends if this Mora Monk worked anywhere, and received a reply in the negative. No one knew that he worked, no one knew where he lived—in fact, nobody knew anything particularly about him, more than that he managed to nose his way into most social gatherings, resplendent in dress-suit, and sporting a diamond pin and heavy chain!

He has a graceful figure, a handsomely-cut face, impressionable brown eyes, blonde hair, and a rather daintily graceful mustache to match.

I called Evelyn into conference, and demanded to know all about the fellow. She said he was a gentleman, and that the report that he was a mesmerist was a malicious falsehood.

To test the matter, I bade her to invite him to dine with us, and he came promptly.

Now that I remember the nerve and effrontery of that scoundrel, it makes my flesh creep to think what this world is coming to. One can't throw a stone, nowadays, without hitting a blackleg or adventurer.

But, detective, I am not ashamed to admit one thing!"

"What is that? The fellow took you in?"

"Yes, won my favor from the start. He was pleasant, jocose, well-acquainted with all parts of the world, finely educated, being able to speak several languages, and was a polished and brilliant conversationalist.

"Such an impression did he make on me, and so good were his references—he claimed to be New York correspondent of the Chicago *Inter-Ocean*)—that I concluded not to make any present interference, but wait, and keep watch.

"I somehow could not bring myself to believe that Mora Monk was as black as he was pictured.

Well, matters glided along, until about a week ago, when the crash came. I was down on 'Change the other day, when I encountered the old friend who had given me the first warning. Just the man I wanted to see, Edwards, he said. 'What do you want of me?' I asked. 'Why weren't you at my house to the *tableaux vivants* last night?' he asked. 'Too tired,' I replied. 'Why, what was the particular attractions? I'm getting too old for that sort of thing. Leave that for the young folks.'

"My daughter was there, was she not?" I ventured. "Yes, she was; and Edwards, I've got something to tell you that will startle you." "What? what?" I demanded. "Can you stand the blow?" he asked. "I can stand anything," I said, desperately. "Then, listen," said he. "Mora Monk has got Evelyn completely under his mesmeric control, and, by virtue of mind and will power, can, by the simple lifting of his finger, make her submissive to his will and do whatsoever he chooses. Why, last night he caused her to cut up a number of dildos without even speaking to her."

"Well, sir, I waited to hear no more. Nearly blind with rage, I rushed to Monk's lodgings, murder in my heart; but Monk was gone—had been absent for several hours. I rushed home. Evelyn was gone. So was her wardrobe. All was gone!"

Here Malcolm wiped the perspiration from his forehead.

CHAPTER II.

MRS. O'MALLEY TALKS.

DICK allowed the old man time to recover his composure ere he spoke again; then he said:

"You think your daughter eloped with Mora Monk, and took her fortune with her?"

"Yes, there can be no doubt of it. By his peculiar influence he has got my poor child entirely in his power. He has subjected her will power completely. It has been his scheme all along to get her under his will control, so he could get possession of her fortune, and at last he has succeeded."

"How old a man is this Monk?"

"Less than thirty."

"Had he any peculiarity of appearance so that he could be described and hunted by telegraph?"

"None, so far as I know, other than what I have told you of."

"Where did he have his lodgings?"

"Number — Macdougal street. It's a furnished room house."

"Did none of your servants know of your daughter's departure?"

"They did not."

"When did Steele take the trail?"

"Day before yesterday."

"And which direction did he go?"

"I am not sure; but I think to the East."

"Then, I'll take the opposite course," Dick decided. "If Monk and your daughter have left town at all, they have, in all probability, gone West, where they would be less likely to be discovered by the detectives and the police. Don't you think so?"

"It is possible, and I think it may be probable," Edwards replied. "The scoundrel will want to get as far away from my vengeance as he conveniently can."

"Well, before we arrange any definite plan of action, I'll take a turn about and learn what I can of this Monk. I may be able to pick up some points."

"True! I had not thought of that. You shall have all the money you may require, and you need not feel backward about spending it."

He went to his huge safe, and returning, placed a large roll of bills in Dick's hand.

"Take it," he said, "and use it as you may think best."

Bidding Billy follow, Dick took his departure, striking out for Macdougal street, where the late lodging-place of Monk was soon spotted.

It was a plain brick, four stories and basement, and had evidently seen the storms of many winters.

Mounting the front steps, Dick gave the doorbell a vigorous jerk, Billy remaining on the sidewalk.

The summons was answered by a broad-shouldered woman, one of Hibernia's own, with a full, red face, hair to match, and a pug nose.

She was slatternly dressed, in a dirty gown, the sleeves of which were rolled up over her freckled arms to the elbows.

Before the door had opened Dick noticed upon it a plate bearing the inscription:

"MRS. BRIDGET O'MALLEY,

"Boarding."

So, jumping at a conclusion, Dick said:

"Ah! excuse me, madam, but have I the honor of addressing Mrs. O'Malley, the landlady?"

"Yis, sor. Is it board yez be wantin', for if it is, shure I can't take yez, as I'm all full!"

"No, madam, we are not looking for board, but I came to pay a call upon Mr. Mora Monk, my brother, whom I have not seen for years!"

"Your brother, sor?"

"Yes, madam. Will you be kind enough to conduct me to his room?"

"He hain't here no more, sor."

"Not here? Why, then, did he write me to meet him *here*?"

"I don't know, sor. He went away all av a suddint, an' it's not the loikes av him I've seen since."

"Where did he go to?"

"Faith, an' how should I know? I wasn't after follerin' him."

"Yet, you no doubt overheard him let some word drop concerning his destination?"

"Nary word, sor."

"Now, look here, my good woman," said Dick, with much sternness, "don't you try to stuff me up with any lies, for I won't have it. I must know the truth!"

"Shure, sor, I ain't tellin' ye no lies."

"Yes, you are. I can read it right in your face. You know something about where Mora Monk went, if not all!"

"No, sor, I do not. If that is all yez come here to foind out, yez can go away, bedad."

"Not yet, Bridget! Mrs. O'Malley, you are not a rich woman, I take it?"

"Indade I'm not, sor, and it's a moightly hard time I have to make inds meet."

"So I supposed. Now, I will tell you what I propose. I will give you a nice little sum to open your mouth, and tell me all you know about Mora, and where he has gone, or I will take you to the police station and keep you there until you do tell. You can choose whichever alternative suits you best."

O'Mally was frightened. She had a houseful of boarders, and if dragged off and locked up, even for a day, she would lose them. However, she was crafty, even in her alarm.

"Who are you?" she demanded.

"I am a detective!"

"How much will yez give to know what little I have to tell, sor?"

"Fifty dollars, if you tell all you know," Dick replied, promptly.

"If it is wurruth anything to yez at all, it be wurruth a hundred," declared Mrs. O'Malley, with a weather eye to business.

"Then, a hundred it shall be," Dick asserted.

"Well, sor, walk right in," Mrs. O'Malley said, and Dick and Billy follower her into a snug little parlor, which, however, savored very strongly of frying grease and onions.

The two detectives took chairs, while Mrs. O'Malley remained standing, with arms akimbo.

"Now then, my good woman, let's hear what you know about Monk and his whereabouts."

"The money feart, ef ye pl'aze, sor. Money 'fore pleasure, always."

"Oh, of course! Here's the amount; now, do please go ahead."

"Well, sir, it's moightly little I have to tell yez; ye can cross yourself on that. Mora Monk has been my boarder for about three months, and during that time has conducted himself respectfully, sor. He paid his bills reg'lar, sor, an' faith he made the least trouble of any one in the house."

"When he told me he was goin' to l'ave I felt r'ale sorry, for he was such a nice, pleasant gentleman. I didn't ax him where he was after goin', for I make it a point, sor, not to keep myself posted on my boarders' business. If I did, I'd be afther havin' my hands full ivery minute av me life."

"A very laudable course to pursue, madam. Go on!"

"Well, the mornin' he was to go, he brought a young lady here, and wanted to know if she could sit in my parlor while he went for a hack. Of course I told him yes."

"While he was gone, shure, I tried to intertain the lady, but she wouldn't talk, only by jerks. I axed her ef she was goin' on a journey, and she said yes. I axed her if it was far? She

didn't know. Was it her wedding trip? She didn't know. I axed her if she intended to return to New York? She didn't know.

"Phat the devil do you know? I was tempted to ax her, but, I didn't. Durin' all this time she had kept her vail down, so I couldn't see her face."

"Well?"

"By an' by Monk came with the hack, and as they drove away, I heard Monk shout to the driver: 'Taylor's Hotel.' That's all I know about it, sor."

"Thank you! Come, Billy," and the twain left the house.

"Where is Taylor's Hotel?" Dick asked when they were outside.

"Over in Jersey City, boss!"

Had they struck the trail in the start?

CHAPTER III.

WHERE HEATH COMES IN.

"WELL, our visit to Macdougal street," Dick remarked, as he and Billy burried back toward the residence of Edwards, "bids fair not to turn out so bad, after all."

"D'y'e think the runaways went over to Jersey City?" Billy asked.

"I haven't a doubt of it. They may not have stayed there; most likely they did not. Is the hotel near either of the depots?"

"Only a few steps from the Pennsylvania and a twenty minutes car-ride to the Erie. Aire ye goin' ter give chase, boss?"

"I shall have to see Edwards before I can tell definitely about that. He may not want to spare the cash for a trip that might carry us around the world!"

They at length reached the gentleman's handsome residence, and were ushered into his presence.

He was lying upon a sofa in the parlor, but immediately arose with an eager expression of countenance on their entrance.

"Well, what news?" he demanded, visibly excited and expectant. "Have you discovered the least clew?"

"A very slight one," Bristol replied, "and yet withal it may be a lead. Listen and I will explain."

Which he did, expressing regret, however, at having paid so much for the woman's confession.

"Tut! tut!" uttered Mr. Edwards. "Had it been ten times that amount, I should not have grumbled. I'll find and reclaim my daughter if it costs me every farthing I'm worth, and I'll kill the scoundrel that abducted her!"

"My luggage is already packed," he went on, "and I am ready for departure whenever you are. Be as expeditious as you can, as I am in constant torture of mind."

"I will," Dick assured. "Before making any positive move, I want to visit Jersey City, and make a few inquiries there."

Just then the door-bell rung.

"I wonder who that can be?" Malcolm Edwards queried.

A servant directly appeared.

"Masters Lew and Jack!" he announced.

"Show them in."

Then, turning to Dick, the gentleman explained:

"My nephews, Lewis and Jackson Heath—the only relatives I have living. They would be my heirs at-law, should Evelyn die before I find her."

"God forbid that!" Dick rejoined, to which the gentleman responded, "Amen!"

Just then the door opened, and the two young men entered.

To use an Arizonian's comparison, they resembled each other "about as nearly as a mule and a saw-horse."

Lew Heath was twenty-three years old, tall, broad-shouldered, muscular, and manly-looking.

He had a good-natured, round face, piercing brown eyes, and hair and mustache of the same hue. He was plainly-dressed, and there was nothing of affectation in manners or speech.

Jack Heath was a human oddity.

He was not over four feet in height, but large of trunk and limb, and upon his back was a fearful hump, which gave him a stooped appearance when he walked. He was about of his cousin's age—for cousins they were, coming of two different families.

He possessed a face of peculiar expression, and irregular feature, which with his big, bulging, owl-like gray eyes, pug-nose and red hair, gave him really an ugly aspect.

He wore no beard, and his attire was much more fastidious than that of Lew Heath.

"Ah! boys, is it you?" and Malcolm Edwards advanced and shook them by the hand. "I wasn't expecting you. Allow me to introduce you to Messrs. Bristol and Bucket, detectives in

my employ. Messrs. Bristol and Bucket, my nephews, Lew and Jack Heath."

The introduction was duly acknowledged, and then all hands became seated.

"Yes, we thought we'd run over and see if you had got any tidings from Evelyn," Lew observed.

"I am sorry to say we have not—that is, nothing to speak of."

"No, nor you won't have," spoke up Jack Heath, with a sardonic grin. "If Eve's gone off with that feller, and taken her sugar along with her, you mark my words she's smart enough to keep out o' your reach, or your detective's, either. She didn't skip by the light of the moon, under no mesmeric influence, don't fear, unless infatuation is mesmerism. One of these so-called mesmerists tried his arts on me once, but he might as well have bucked his head against a stone wall."

"I doubt if lightning would faze you, Jack!" said Edwards, with a shrug.

"Never tried it," was the reply.

Conversation ran on for a while; then wine was produced and lightly partaken of, after which Dick and Billy took their leave for the purpose of visiting Jersey City.

"Boss," said Billy, "I guess you and me knows one another tolerably well by this time, eh?"

"You bet, my boy. What's on your mind now? Unburden yourself."

"Boss, I don't like that dwarf fer a cent!"

"You don't? Well, then, you and I are of about the same mind, Billy. All the good in him could be scraped up and put in a pint cup, if I am not much mistaken in my opinion."

"You bet! If Mr. Edwards's darter should kick the bucket—mind, I don't mean this Bucket what is oratin'—that dwarf would just jump clear out o' his shirt fer joy!"

"I've an idea such an event would delight him. It won't do any harm to keep an eye on him, in case we run across him again. I believe there's mischief in the fellow."

"I'll kick the Bucket, the young oaken Bucket, the bootblackin' Bucket, that wished all boots well, ef that ain't, boss. I'm sure of it! Leave it ter me, and I'll find out. You go on over ter Jersey and investegate there. I'll remain here. Ef I don't catch no eels, why you'll find me at the old man's."

When they reached Cortlandt Street Ferry, via the Sixth Avenue Elevated Railway, Dick said:

"Well, maybe you'd better stay this side. But remain around here and keep as much out of sight as possible."

"Why, boss?"

"We may have been followed. There's no telling."

"By the dwarf?"

"Ay! by either of the cousins, if Edwards did not know enough not to let them into our matters. Both would have a claim upon Malcolm Edwards's leavings, on his death, in case he did not make a will to the contrary. This of course, providing Evelyn dies first."

"Do you think she will?"

"I wouldn't like to insure her life, heavily, and run the risks, seeing what reasons there are for getting her out of the way."

Dick crossed over the river but Billy remained on the New York side, and paced thoughtfully up and down West street, his bright eyes ever on the alert.

And not without a good return for his watchfulness for, ere long, he saw Lew and Jack Heath coming down Cortlandt street, toward the ferry, side by side.

They were conversing earnestly and apparently the topic of their conversation was most interesting.

Billy edged as near to where they passed, as possible without discovery, but only caught the few words.

"He must not start."

"Pshaw!"

"I say no! He's the shrewdest—"

It was Jack Heath who uttered the first and last sentences.

"He mustn't start, hey?" muttered the boy detective. "Well, this will be news for Dickey. Hum! guess I'll go over to Jersey, too. Things is lookin' up like a poppy."

The Heaths had gone aboard the ferry-boat, and Billy had barely time to get aboard, when the chains clanked, the waters swashed, and the boat started.

Lew and Jack Heath had gone to the front of the boat but Billy did not dare venture that far, for fear of discovery.

When the boat landed there was a general disembarkation.

The cousins wandered about for a while through the principal streets, and finally entered a covered beer-garden, where were plenty of chairs and tables.

Fortunately, for Billy, the tables were pretty close together, and he slipped around, and got a seat at a table adjoining, so that his back was to Lew Heath's face, and to Jack Heath's back. Thus, without being noticed he could eat oysters, and listen—drink in, as it were, the substance of the conspirators' conversation.

The Heaths ordered several beers, but did not seem to get down to business.

Finally Jack Heath said:

"Well, Lew, I've given ye time to decide. What are ye goin' to do?"

"Oh! Jack! I cannot. I would be a scoundrel, an ingrate, and a coward."

"You have your choice. You know the consequences."

"Well, I must stand them; I cannot go back on uncle, who has always used me so well."

"But, look ye! You've not a copper, nor anything to raise one on, have you?"

"That is true."

"Then, why not be considerate of your own interests?"

"I cannot."

"Then, pay for this beer. The waiter will settle with you," and rising, the young ruffian stalked out of the garden.

Lewis Heath gazed after him, white with terror. Had he committed some crime, and was fearful of being betrayed? or was it because he was not able to pay for the beer, and was apprehensive of being placed in the hands of the police?

Billy Bucket was on the alert. He understood the situation thoroughly. He at once arose, and going to Heath's table, sat down.

"What's the matter, chum? Did der bloke leave yer in de lurch, 'cause ef he did, you're all right. Here, waiter, how much fer de lager?"

"Thirty cents."

"Correct. Bring us some more, an' take et out o' that!"

And the waiter bowed smilingly.

As for Lewis Heath, he sat like one in a stupor, but watching Billy mechanically, rather than studiously.

CHAPTER IV.

STILL ON THE CHASE.

On his arrival in Jersey City, Deadwood Dick went at once to Taylor's Hotel, and after introducing himself, asked permission to examine the register, which was accorded him.

The search revealed nothing more than the following:

"M. MONK & WIFE, New York."

"They've been here, sure enough," Dick mused. "I wonder if they are here now?"

He called the clerk's attention to the registration.

"Do you remember those parties?" he inquired.

"Quite well, sir."

"Are they here now?"

"Oh! no. They only remained part of the day, while the gentleman attended to some business about town. His lady remained here, until he was ready to depart."

"Do you know where they went to?"

"I do not."

"Did they go off on the cars?"

"They did."

"Which road did they take?"

"The Pennsylvania route; at least I think they did, as they got a boy to carry their sachels there. I think I know of a way you can find out where they were ticketed for."

"How?"

"By Tommy Keefe, a messenger boy. They sent him to procure the tickets for them."

"Summon the boy at once, and I'll stand treat."

The clerk then proceeded to work the telephone, and, as a result, in a few minutes Tommy Keefe put in an appearance.

"Tommy, do you remember the party you got the tickets for, the other day?" asked the clerk.

"Yes, sir, I believe I do;—the feller with the fur cap, an' the lady had her veil down."

"The same. Now, Tommy, this gentleman is a detective, and perhaps you can be some assistance to him, to your own profit."

"Yes, Tommy, if you will oblige me by answering a few questions, I will give you a dollar," Dick added.

"I will do the best I can, sir," Tommy replied, respectfully.

"All right! Come and sit down."

So they went and sat down.

"Now, then, Tommy, the clerk tells me that this gentleman employed you to purchase some tickets for him."

"Yes, sir."

"Where did you get them?"

"Over at a scalper's office, on Broadway."

"Indeed? Where were these tickets for?"

"For Chicago, with stop-off privileges at Buffalo, Cleveland, and Toledo."

"Did you hear the man mention whether he was going any further than Chicago?"

"He asked me to see what a ticket would cost through to Denver. None could be had."

"Very well. That will do. Here is your dollar, and I'm much obliged."

Tommy took the dollar and vanished, in great glee.

There was nothing more for Dick to do in Jersey City, so he took the ferry back to New York to hold another conversation with Malcolm Edwards, relative to future movements.

So we will leave him to pursue his way, and return to Billy, who had seated himself at the table with Lew Heath.

"That cousin o' yours is a duffer!" Billy asserted, emphatically, "and I wonder that you associate wid sech cattle as him. What did he want ye to do?"

"Oh, nothing! nothing!" young Heath replied, evincing more terror.

"Get out! Don't try to fool me! I overheard your conversation, and know, from what I heard, that he has a pull on you, by which he hopes ter git ye inter some scrape. Ain't I right?"

"I cannot answer you. You were very kind to settle this bill, but I cannot answer your questions. They do not concern the affair between myself and Jack."

"Now, lookee here, mister," and Billy brought his fist down on the table; "I know purty near suthin' about this scheme o' Jack's. He is more or less connected with the abduction of Evelyn Edwards, and you are not as white as you might be. Ain't I right?"

Lew did not answer. He was white and speechless.

"Now, then," continued Billy, "your cousin he evidently heerd about my pard, Dickey of Deadwood, and knows that his ekal can't be found in the detective perfesh. He don't want Dick an' me ter go nosin' around in search o' Mora Monk an' Evelyn Edwards, for fear he'll find 'em. Ain't I squee-gee, there?"

Still no answer from Lewis Heath.

"If Evelyn Edwards should never return," pursued Billy—"for instance, if she should be found dead, whv, Jack and yourself would become Malcolm Edwards's heirs. Ain't I preachin' in prose purty plumb?"

"I cannot answer your questions," Heath said, rising. "I am grateful for your kindness in paying that bill—that, and nothing more. If I ever meet you again, I will return the money you expended; but you have no right to question me."

And with this, he stalked stiffly out of the room.

Billy Bucket gazed after him with a whistle of astonishment.

"Well, I'll be darned!" he muttered. "That's cool; I'll be blowed if it ain't. He didn't 'pear ter like my medicine, somehow. Ther pill was too bitter, I guess. Wish, now, I'd a' let him pay his own beer bill. Well, I guess I might as well get out of here."

He left the garden, and walked as far as Taylor's Hotel, but found nothing of Deadwood Dick there.

"Guess he's back to New York," Billy mused, "and there is where I'll go. There's no use o' foolin' around here any longer."

So he recrossed the Hudson, and made west direct to the Edwards's Fifth avenue residence.

Both he and Deadwood Dick arrived there at the same time, but from different directions.

Mr. Edwards received them cordially.

"Well, my friends, have you any good news for me?" he asked, eagerly.

"The only news I have," replied Dick, "is that a party registering as Monk and wife stopped for a few hours at Taylor's Hotel, five days ago, and then started for Chicago, with tickets containing stop-off privileges at Buffalo, Cleveland and Toledo."

"Do you think they stopped off, at each of these places?" Mr. Edwards asked.

"Possibly, else why should they want the stop-overs? Yes, I think they stopped off at each of the three places. If they are married, and this is their wedding tour, they will most likely aim to see the principal cities along the route."

"Just so. Then, giving them one, or the

best part of one day from here to Buffalo, one day in Buffalo, one at the Falls, and on to Cleveland—that's three of the five days. One day in Cleveland, and one in Toledo. That would bring them in Chicago some time tomorrow."

"Well, yes, according to your reckoning, but they may have gone straight on to Chicago."

"Well, let's hear what Master Bucket has to report."

"Yes, spit it out, Billy!" Dick said, with a smile, "for I see you are spoiling to have your say."

So Billy "saile in," and gave his story, to which the others listened in surprise.

"I cannot believe that my nephews would thus willfully conspire against me and mine!" Mr. Edwards declared, with emphasis. "They have been very kindly disposed toward me, and they are the last ones who would plot against me."

"That may or may not be," Dick responded. "Relatives, I find, are no more to be trusted, as a rule, than perfect strangers."

"You, too, then, share in the boy's suspicions?"

"I do. I like not the looks of Jack Heath. I believe him to be a bad egg!"

"Well, what's to be done next?"

"I know of but one thing—to strike out for Chicago. By reaching there in the shortest possible time, we may be able to head them off."

"Well, perhaps you are right. When shall we start?"

"At half-past six, by the Erie."

"I will be ready."

CHAPTER V. "OLD MAN" MONK.

AND at six and a half o'clock, Dick, Billy and Mr. Edwards were aboard a Pullman car, moving out of the Jersey City Depot, en route for Chicago.

But, when once well off on their way Billy tired of the rich surroundings of the luxurious Pullman and so made his way to the smoking-car, where to take his ease with a "bully five-center," which had become his special dissipation when funds were flush.

Every seat in the smoker was occupied except one beside a skinny septuagenarian, who, evidently, was fresh from the rural districts.

This seat Billy proceeded to appropriate unto himself, without leave or license, at which the old gent gave a grunt of displeasure.

"Young man, you should always ask permission before you sit down beside a person in a railway car!" he said, severely.

"Can't see it!" Billy retorted. "No one 'cept a giant has a right ter two seats. As you ain't much o' a giant, I guess ther's room fer two of us without squeezin'. Have a smoke—genuine Florida Fumer!" and the gamin offered Uncle Hayseed a cigar.

"Thankee, young man. I don't often smoke, but I'll try this for luck. You city-bred folks is awful extravagant in the matter of smoking, ain't ye? It's astonishin' the sight of money that is puffed away in tobacco. Why, up where I live, no one thinks of smokin' a cigar 'cept on the Fourth o' July and Christmas. Pipe's good enough the rest of the time."

"Where do you live?" queried Billy.

"Up the road, at Savona."

"Ye'r a farmer, I take it."

"I used to be, but I'm gettin' old, and I sold out to my son, Zeke, a year ago. What's your name, young man? Ain't you purty young to be travelin' alone?"

Billy laughed.

"Young!" he exclaimed. "I allow I've traveled more miles than any man you've got in yer town o' Savona."

"Not more than 'Squire Beals," averred the old man, positively.

"Well, how far has the 'squire been?"

"Clean to Kansas City," declared the old fellow, in triumph.

"Pooh! That's nothin'!" declared the boy. "I've been as far as Leadville, Colorado, and am now on my trip around the world—me and my partner."

"Land alive! you don't mean it!"

"Of course I do. Spose I'd say so if I didn't?"

"What's your name?"

"Billy Bucket."

"And what's yer partner's?"

"Deadwood Dick. We're Jim dandies, we aire. We are the high cockolorum detectives from 'Way Back. Now, you bet, when we git after a feller, we never leave off the trail till we collar our man."

"Detectives, eh? I wonder if you mightn't

run across my poor misguided son somewhere in your travels?"

"Very likely," Billy encouraged, with an eye to business. "We are after somebody's misguided son, and we expect to nail him 'twixt here and 'Frisco. He's a slippery cuss, too. Give me a retainer of ten dollars, and we'll let you know if we find your son."

"Ten dollars! Jewhittaker! that's all hay is fetchin' a ton."

"Can't help it. Them's our terms."

"Who is the man you are searching for?"

"Oh, he's a scamp of the first magnitude, a regular snoozer. The name he sails under is Mora Monk."

The old settler leaped to his feet with a yell.

"Thunder an' lightnin'!" he ejaculated. "Why, darn my skin, that's my son!"

"The dickens you say! You the daddy of them chap we're huntin' for?"

"Yes, it must be so, for my son's name is Mora Monk. He was always a wayward boy, desirous for spendin' money and for playin' poker. Recently he wrote up to me that he was sick, and requested that he would be much obliged to me if I would mail him a check for two hundred dollars to defray his funeral expenses, as he was lying at the point of death. Now, let me tell ye, my son, I have grubbed purty hard for what few shillin's I've got saved up, and I intend to hang onter 'em. Ef Mora had been a sensible, church-going sort of a lad, I would have made him my favorite. But that could not be. The devil hovered over the bed at the birth and placed his stamp on that boy, and he has been the disgrace of the family ever since."

The old gent was talking more to himself than to Billy, but the deputy was taking it all in, just the same, and jotting it down in his mental memoranda, which, having a retentive memory, he was able to do.

"Well," said Billy, "I reckon he ain't 'zactly an angel, or else we shouldn't be after him. You wait here. I'm sumthin' of a detective, but not so much as my partner. I'll go and fetch him."

So Billy returned to the palace car and informed Deadwood Dick of his "find."

Dick of course at once proceeded to the smoking car, and there had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Mr. Monk, of Savona.

"So you are the father of Mora Monk, eh?" he queried.

"Yes, I am."

"How long since you saw him last?"

"It is now a matter of seven years."

"When you parted, did you part friends?"

"Well, no, I can't say we did. Mora wanted money, and I didn't have any, 'cept what was tied up in the bank. So he got in a huff, forged my name for two hundred dollars, drew the money, and left for parts unknown. That's the last I heard of him, until I received the letter, of which I was telling your young friend."

"You came on to New York, purposely to see your son?"

"Yes."

"And you didn't find him?"

"I did not. I went to the place where he told me to come, but, he wasn't there. So I started back for home."

This was all that could be elicited from Hezekiah Monk, of Savona, so Dick and deputy directly withdrew to the palace car.

The train steamed on through the night, noiseily—a flying thing, literally, with a hundred lurid eyes.

At Middletown the conductor announced that the train would be detained about ten minutes, through a trifling accident to the engine, and passengers who wanted to get a lunch, would have the opportunity; so, bidding Billy remain where he was, Dick left the car to get some sandwiches and fruit.

He made the purchases, and was about returning to the car, when some one ran slap up against him, with a force that sent him to the platform on his back, causing his purchases to scatter in all directions.

Ever agile, the detective was on his feet in an instant, to find himself face to face with Jack Heath, upon whose face was a demoniac grin.

"Curse you," cried Dick, "did you run against me, on purpose?"

"Certainly not!" Jack replied, "but, if ye give me any o' your lip, I'll run you down again!" Heath asseverated, evidently bent on a row, for some reason best known to himself.

Dick made no reply. The locomotive whistle had shrieked, and the train was beginning to move from the station, so no time was to be lost.

Hauling off, Dick dealt the young ruffian a

blow full in the face, and knocked him down—and had just time to jump aboard the last car of the train.

Dick saw the discomfited train spy struggle to his feet, and endeavor to overtake the train; but it was no use; the locomotive was too much for him.

When Dick re-entered the car, he found both Billy and Mr. Edwards considerably excited.

"We thought you had got left!" the latter said.

"I came after it. Did you see the racket on the platform?"

"Yes."

"You're satisfied, now, are you, that Jack Heath is a scamp?"

"I am beginning to believe there is something wrong, else why should he be on this train?"

"That's it, exactly. He has been dogging us."

"I never would have believed it, had I not seen him on the station platform."

"Well, he is left behind, now, anyhow, and it will make him hustle to overtake us."

Billy Bucket was more thoroughly posted as to railroad matters than Dick.

"He can overtake us, boss," he announced. "Section Number 2 follows this train, two hours later, and gains on us, so that when we arrive in Hornellsville, it will reach there only twenty minutes after Section one. There, very likely, we will meet Mr. Jack."

"If we do it will be the worse for him," was Dick's remark.

"Don't be rash, Mr. Bristol," Mr. Edwards urged. "The young man may mean all for the best."

"I am sure of that," Dick returned, with sarcasm. "All for the best for himself!"

"Well, maybe so. Yet, I cannot believe that Jack, whom I have always been so friendly with since my return from Brazil, would willfully plot against me!"

"He's a pin-feather chump," put in Billy.

"He don't know enough to be a villain."

When the train arrived at Elmira, Dick went into the smoking-car to see if old Monk was still there. But he was not.

Dick then made a tour of the train, in search of him, but all to no avail. The old man from Savona apparently was not aboard.

Where he had disappeared to was somewhat of a mystery, as the train had not stopped except at the principal stations.

"This is strange!" Dick said, on returning to their car, and communicating the discovery he had made.

"I'll bet that old skin is one of the gang!" declared Billy. "He ain't on board this train fer nothin', and don't yer forget it! Mister Edwards, a bootblack's advice mayn't be of much account, but, if I was you, when we git inter Buffalo I'd advise you to git yer life insured!"

"Get my life insured? Why, what for?"

"'Cause I reckon it ain't very safe. Them cousins, coupled up with Mora Monk, have a notion that they're goin' to do yer, and ef we don't look out right sharp, they will, too!"

Mr. Edwards cast an inquiring glance at Deadwood Dick.

Dick nodded his approval.

"I am of the same opinion as Billy," Dick said. "Your nephews undoubtedly have a strong desire to become your heirs, and stranger things have happened than that they should seek to prevent your finding Evelyn. If Evelyn was put out of the way, and then, you were to suddenly drop off, without leaving a will, these nephews, as next of kin, would succeed to your wealth."

There was certainly logic in this, and Mr. Edwards realized it.

"My God! am I thus to stand in fear of being murdered?" he groaned. "Why, I, of all men, should escape the blow of the assassin!"

"But it is difficult for me to believe that my nephews, whom, since my return from Brazil, I have treated so liberally, have designs upon my life, or my property."

"Well, maybe they have not. But, I shall, while employed by you, keep a very sharp lookout for them!"

It was just the break of day when the train drew up in Hornellsville.

There Dick got off and took a look around, to see if he could discover anything of old Monk, or of Jack Heath; but neither were there.

Section 2 joined Section 1 at this point, but the journey on to Buffalo was resumed so quickly that Dick had not the time to see whether Jack Heath was on board the second section or not.

The train rolled into the depot at Buffalo, and our party of three debarked to tarry over for

the afternoon fast train to the West, in order to give Dick time to pay a visit to the principal hotels and examine the registers. This he did, but on none of the books was the name of Mora Monk to be found.

So there was nothing to do but to steer straight for Chicago.

Dick returned to the Lake Shore Depot, and found Billy and Mr. Edwards awaiting his arrival with evident anxiety.

"Well, what appears to be the matter?" Dick asked, as he drew near. "Seen any ghosts or goblins?"

"We have seen something as significant," Mr. Edwards replied. "My nephew, Jack, is here!"

"The deuce you say! When and where did you see him?"

"Across there, by the Merchant's Hotel, about fifteen minutes ago. I started to meet him, and find out what he was following us up for, but, when I got out of the depot, he had disappeared, and I could not find hide nor hair of him."

"How much money has Jack Heath got, to travel on?" Dick demanded.

"I don't suppose his total cash capital will exceed a couple of thousand dollars. Which will be sufficient to enable him to follow us."

"I suppose so. But, what can be his object? He cannot intend to murder us, do you think?"

"I am not prepared, positively, to define his motive, in following us," Dick replied, "but I don't think the fellow is too good for any mean act. He certainly has an object, and what is it, if it is not bad?"

"I am sure I don't know."

"One thing is certain," Dick said, grimly, "if I get my hands on him again, I'll know why he is following. I'm not fond of being shadowed, especially by a fellow like Mr. Jack Heath, and if he knows when he is well off he will take the back trail."

A watch was kept for Heath but nothing was seen of him; he evidently was "keeping shady."

At six o'clock, the pursuers boarded the Chicago fast Express, and were borne away on their westward journey.

This train, also, went in two sections, but Jack Heath was not on the one that carried Deadwood Dick.

CHAPTER V.

NO LUCK.

THE trip to Chicago, was barren of incident. On their arrival the next morning, they repaired to the Palmer House, registered and were assigned a suite of communicating rooms.

After breakfast, Dick bade Mr. Edwards remain at the hotel, while he and Billy set forth on a scouting trip.

"Where yer goin'?" Billy inquired. "What hev yer got ter start off on, as a beginnin'?"

"Not much, it is true, but something may turn up. We will try the hotel registers, first, and see what they pan out."

And they did so.

Every hotel in Chicago—and they are a legion—was visited, the last one being the Hotel Grace, corner of Clark and Jackson streets.

Here, inscribed upon the register, the previous day, was the following:

"MORA MONK & WIFE, New York."

Dick's pulse quickened, as he saw the writing.

He was on the trail, sure enough, and not far behind the game!

Dick immediately asked the attention of the chief clerk.

"I am a detective," he said, exhibiting his badge.

"I find upon your register the name of a man I am looking for. Will you answer me a few questions?"

"Certainly, sir. What is it you wish to know?"

"You have registered, here, Mora Monk and wife—yesterday. Are they here, now?"

"They are not," the clerk replied, referring to the book. "Oh! I remember them, now, when I come to think. They were a queer pair."

"How, queer?"

"The wife insisted in having a room by herself. The man objected, but she insisted and had a room by herself."

"When did these parties leave?"

"At six-thirty, this morning."

"Do you know where they departed for?"

"I do not, but I can perhaps find out."

"I wish you would do so. It will be a favor."

The clerk touched a call-bell, and one of the hall boys appeared.

"Josey, go fetch Hines, the hackman," the

clerk ordered. "Tell him I want to see him, on business of importance."

Josey hurried away, and ten minutes later returned accompanied by a burly Irishman, in livery.

"Hines," said the clerk, "you remember the lady and gentleman you took away from here this morning?"

"Yes, sir, I remember the party right well, and a good cause I have, too, for when they got out at the depot, the son-of-a-gun slapped the lady in the face, and I punched his head for him, the bloody loafer!"

"Do you know where they were ticketed for?" asked Dick.

"Yes. They were goin' to Indianapolis, for I heard the fellow mention that city, and saw their baggage checked for there."

"Thank you. Here's the price of a good ball!" and slipping a quarter into the cabby's hands, Dick and Billy returned to the Palmer House.

Mr. Edwards was in a feverish state of anxiety.

"Have you got any news?" he asked.

"Nothing definite," Dick replied. "We are too late to apprehend them here. They left here, this morning, for Indianapolis. We must follow by the next train."

It was approaching noon when they boarded a train for Indianapolis.

Deadwood Dick was the last person to get on board. He had remained in the background, as if to scrutinize every person who got aboard; but failed to single out the one he was looking for, and that was Jack Heath.

So boarding the train, at the last moment, he was borne away toward Indianapolis. The run was a quick one, considering the distance, and our party were at their destination sooner than they had expected.

They went to the Bates House, where, seeing Mr. Edwards comfortably established in a pleasant suit of rooms, Dick and Billy went out to take a look about town.

"D'y expect to find 'em here, boss?" queried Billy, as they walked along.

"I have an idea that the point they are bound for is St. Louis, and that they made no stop here."

"I don't believe we will ketch up to 'em," Billy declared. "That snoozer isn't sleepin' while we're follerin' him, and don't you fergit that. He knows he's foller'd jest as well as we do. My ijee is that Jack Heath is a sort o' rear guard, and keeps the t'other feller posted, so's he can elude us. How's that for a suggester, boss?"

"Well, there may be something in it; still I am hardly inclined to think that Monk and Jack are working together. The conversation you overheard between Lew and Jack showed no relations between Monk and them."

"That is so," Billy assented, thoughtfully.

In the course of their stroll they came to the Sherman House.

"You wait outside," Dick ordered, "while I take a glance at the register."

Dick entered the hotel office.

The registration for that and the previous day, at the Sherman, was large, but Dick's keen eye quickly caught the signature he sought.

"M. MONK AND WIFE, New York."

"Are these people here?" he asked, of the clerk.

"No. They only remained long enough to wash up, and get some of the railroad dust off of them."

"Do you know if they resumed their journey by rail?"

"I do not. I am inclined to think, however, that they did not, as they left here in a hack, whereas our 'bus was at their disposal, free of charge."

"Could you direct me, so that I could find the hackman who took them away?"

"Well, I guess so. He and half a dozen others have a stand across the street yonder. The man you want is Number 69. His name is Cooper."

Thanking the clerk, Dick and Billy set out in search of Mr. Cooper, finding him at his usual stand.

"You are Mr. Cooper, I believe?" Dick said.

"I am," was the reply. "Have a conveyance, sir?"

"Well, that depends. I want to ask you a few questions. You took a man and woman away from the Sherman House this morning—a rather dandy-looking chap, and the woman wore a veil."

"Yes, I remember them."

"Where did you take them?"

"Oh! a deuce of a ways—way out on the

outskirts of the city, to Fogg's Tavern. After takin' 'em way out there, I only got part of the price I asked, 'cause the feller pleaded that he hadn't no money."

"What will you charge to take us out to within an eighth of a mile of this tavern?" Dick asked.

"Five dollars, and not a red less, and cash in advance at that."

"I guess we can do better."

"Well, I'll say four—two dollars apiece. Does that hit you?"

"It does, providing it is there and return."

"Well, all right. Jump in."

So Dick and Billy got into the hack and were whirled away through the streets of the city.

"I don't know how this venture is going to turn out, Billy," Dick said, "but I hope all right. When we leave this conveyance I shall leave you with it. If I do not come back in an hour, have yourself driven back into Indianapolis in hot haste, and get Mr. Edwards to send the police in search of me."

"All right, boss; it shall be as you say, but I'd rather you'd let me go along with you."

"No, you will be of no use to me, except to remain behind. If I get into trouble at Fogg's Tavern, you will be outside to bring me aid, see? And you may have an opportunity of seeing if Jack Heath is prowling around this neighborhood or not. I know you and Jack are in love with each other, and therefore presume that a collision between you would result in hugs and kisses."

"I ain't but a kid, maybe, but I'm mighty, when it comes to a scrap!" Billy replied, curtly.

And judging from what he had seen of his young protege's prowess, Dick was prepared to believe it.

CHAPTER VI.

AT FOGG'S.

THE hack bowled along at good speed, and the passengers enjoyed the ride exceedingly. A journey out of Indianapolis is peculiarly attractive, the roads being dotted with fine residences, and the spacious lawns handsomely hedged.

After what seemed an interminable drive, the coachman drew rein and dismounted.

"Eighth of a mile to Fogg's Tavern. Straight road. You kin sight it from here."

"That old shebang off yonder?"

"That's the place."

"Very well. You remain here with my young friend. I may be gone an hour or I may be gone a week. However it may be, you will receive one dollar per hour for what time you are detained, and you are to obey the directions of my boy partner. Is it a bargain?"

"Dunno as I kin make a dollar an hour any easier. But, I'll tell ye, boss, maybe ye'd think it impudent of me ef I was ter give yer a little advice."

"Not at all. I am always open for advice, especially when in a strange town."

"Well, I thort you was a sensible sort of feller, or I shouldn't have broached the subject as I have," the hackman returned. "Ef ye'r goin' to Fogg's Tavern, you need a few pointers—that is to say, you want to be posted. The tavern is notorious as a resort for the worst characters in the city, and about your best holt is to keep your weather eye peeled for a squall, which aire sart'in to occur."

"All right. Much obliged for your advice. I guess I can pull through. If I'm not back in an hour, drive Billy back into town, and he will bring the police to my rescue."

"All right. I will do so."

Dick set out on foot for the tavern. It was an odd-looking, rambling structure, and evidently had been there many years. It was only one story in height, but covered a considerable area of ground.

As he drew near, Dick saw several ill-looking fellows lounging on a bench just outside. They were typical toughs.

Dick was familiar enough with Western character to know how to handle it, and well knew that nothing so hits the "tender spot" of the average tavern loafer as to invite him to have a "smile" at your expense—by which act you are morally sure to have him on your side in case of a free fight.

The gang outside of Fogg's looked particularly thirsty, and Dick decided that it would be advisable to invite all of them inside.

"Well, boys, sunning yourselves, I see," he said, cheerily. "Don't you find that rather dry work?"

"Devilish dry," responded one of the party. "In fact, these are purty dry times around these parts."

"So? Well, I guess it's the same way everywhere. Would you fellows feel insulted if I was to ask you in to lubricate?"

"Well, I reckon not, stranger. We are members of the Never-Refuse Club, and there is a heavy penalty for refusin' to take a drink when invited. My name is Job Jinks, and I'm the president o' the club."

"Well, Mr. Jinks, bring along your friends, and we will tackle some of Fogg's tanglefoot."

So the party adjourned to the bar-room, a long, rambling, foul-smelling place, containing a counter, and a few tables and stools.

The proprietor of the place was Fogg, but it so happened that Fogg was of the female persuasion—a lank, lean, lantern-jawed woman, whose aspect was unpromising, to say the least.

There was another delegation of toughs in the room, but Dick called them all up and treated, to the evident gratification of "Mom" Fogg.

"Ye'r a gentleman, sir," she said, addressing Dick. "I seldom have customers the likes of you, nowadays, tho' Jerry used to have 'em."

"What's become of Jerry?" asked Dick.

"Oh! he's dead these two year. Did ye know him, sure?"

"Well, I reckon, and a game old lad he was, too. He was worth his weight in gold, was Jerry."

"Ah! you're right there, young man. Jerry was white an' square, an' no one kin say a word ag'in' him. He could lick any man in these parts, and wasn't afraid to tackle the best of 'em."

"I suppose he left you pretty well heeled?"

"No, I'm very poor. All I have is my little tavern to depend upon for support."

"I suppose you catch a few boarders, now and then?"

"Very seldom."

"I believe you have a couple, now, whom I know—Mr. Monk and wife."

"No such parties here," the old woman replied, grimly. "The only ones as hangs out about this place is the present company."

"That will do to tell the marines," Dick retorted. "Mora Monk brought a lady here this morning, and he and she are here now, and I want to see them."

"You can't, for there's no such people here!" was the reply.

"It is useless for you to lie to me, madam. I know they are here."

"You know nothing of the kind. Who are you, that you dare come into my house and address me in this manner?"

"Well, if it pleases you to know, I am a detective. I am here to find Mora Monk, whom you are harboring, and you will find it to your advantage to give him up, unless you want to spend a term in jail yourself."

"Me go to jail? Well, I guess not, mister! Boys, will ye stand by and see yer poor old mammy abused in this manner, after all she has done fer ye? This feller is a sneakin' officer, what will make ye all trouble, ef ye don't lay him out."

"Jest what I thought he was," cried one of the roughs. "He can't survive round hyer, while Ihev a say. Come, boys, let's thrash him within an inch of his life!"

And with this the whole gang made a rush for Dick.

Things certainly looked desperate for the Wild West detective, but he had anticipated trouble, and was in a measure prepared for the worst, and, placing his back against the wall, he drew his revolvers.

"Back, you hounds!" he cried, "or I'll fire."

But, there was no apparent disposition on the part of the roughs to desist, so Dick emptied the contents of one of his weapons into their ranks, taking care not to aim to kill.

The effect of the shots was to cause a general stampede from the tavern, leaving Dick the master of the situation.

"Now's my chance," he muttered. "What I find out here I must find out now."

He barred the tavern door, after the gang had all left the place, and then set about exploring the tavern, whose dozen rooms were all on the ground floor.

The furniture was of the roughest description, and the floors uncarpeted. Everywhere were filth and disorder.

From room to room Dick went, but his mission was a futile one. No trace of Mora Monk nor Evelyn Edwards was to be found.

If they had come to the tavern at all, they must have gone away again, as they were now nowhere to be found about the premises.

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Dick was mystified.

Had they taken alarm, and fled further on into the country, or had they returned to the city?

Two things seemed certain: They were not at Fogg's Tavern, and the prospects were that he was there to stay awhile, for he could hear a hubbub of voices outside, and knew that the gang were planning for revenge.

They were all gathered at the front of the building, however, leaving the rear unguarded, so that was his opportunity.

Out of the rear door he glided and hastened away, keeping the tavern between him and the gang.

In a few minutes he was at the hack. And getting aboard, he said to the coachman:

"Those parties are not at the tavern. Now, where do you suppose they can have gone to?"

"Give it up, sir. There's where I left them."

"Can it be they walked back into Indianapolis?"

"I don't think so. It's quite a little distance to walk, and besides, we should have been pretty apt to have met them on the road."

"It would seem so. Is Indianapolis the nearest railway station to Fogg's Tavern?"

"Oh! no. Sunnyside station, on the Indianapolis and St. Louis road, is on beyond, only a short distance."

"Do trains stop there?"

"Only on signal."

"I think I begin to see through the matter!" Dick said, addressing Billy. "Monk has got on to the knowledge that we are following him, and has adopted this method of throwing us off the track. No doubt Jack Heath has kept him posted as to our movements, and, instead of leaving the city by the regular way, he has made this cross-cut, to delay and puzzle us."

"I reckon you've about arrived at the truth o' the matter, sir," said the hackman. "It ain't much of a walk to Sunnyside, and there he could get a ticket through to St. Louis, and be well on his way, ere you would figure out what had become of him."

"Well, we'll take it for granted that this is correct theory. Drive us to Sunnyside, with all speed. After unloading me there, you are to drive my partner back to the city."

The driver cracked his whip, and the vehicle rolled away rapidly.

"Now, boss, what's the programme for me?" Billy asked as they sped along.

"Well, after you leave me at Sunnyside, you are to return to Indianapolis, get Mr. Edwards, and start direct for St. Louis. When you arrive there, put up at the Planter's Hotel, and remain there until you hear from me. Keep your eyes about you, and if you catch a glimpse of Jack Heath again, dog him and find out who his associates are."

"You bet I will! I kinder reckon we'd make more headway by follerin' him than we would by follerin' t'other feller."

"It may be. Monk, however, is no doubt the principal villain in the case. He is our game—not Jack Heath."

The hack rolled along rapidly, and in due time arrived at Sunnyside, a wee bit of a hamlet with plenty of picturesque scenery, but mighty little life.

When the hack arrived at the station, Dick and Billy alighted and entered the waiting-room.

As no trains were due at the time, the place was deserted, with the exception of the station-agent, a pleasant-appearing young man of about Dick's own age, who was tipped back in an armchair, composedly smoking a cigar.

"I wish to make a few inquiries of you," Dick said. "What time did the last train pass this station *en route* for St. Louis?"

"Two hours ago—nine twenty."

"Did it stop here for passengers?"

"Yes, on signal."

"What were these passengers, may I ask?"

"Certainly. They were a lady and gentleman."

"Where were they ticketed for?"

"That I cannot tell you, as I do not know. They had their tickets from Indianapolis. It is my impression, however, that they went to St. Louis."

"Very likely. What time does the next train leave for St. Louis?"

"Not until five o'clock this afternoon."

"You might as well go back to Indianapolis and start from there, boss," suggested Billy.

"I don't know but what you're right," Dick agreed. "I will gain nothing by remaining here, that is pretty sure. I guess, on the whole, I'll go back with you, and we will all start together."

So they got aboard the hack, and were driven

back to the city, to find Mr. Edwards awaiting them at the hotel, right auxiously.

"I was beginning to get worried about your non-return," he said. "Have you got any news?"

"Yes. Monk and your daughter have gone on to St. Louis, I suspect," and Dick informed him of what had been ascertained.

"Then let's be off for St. Louis at once."

"We can't go before the train goes."

All hands kept closely to their rooms, during the remainder of the day.

As the hour of five approached Dick descended to the great open office, to settle their bill.

As he approached the office counter, the clerk took a letter from the desk and extended it.

"Your name is Bristol, I believe?" he said.

"Yes, sir."

"This letter, then, evidently belongs to you. It came by last delivery of mail."

"All right. Much obliged to you."

And, taking the letter, Dick tore off the envelope, which was directed in a man's coarse handwriting.

The following is a verbatim copy of it:

"—BRISTOL, detective:

"I am aware that you and old Edwards are dogging me, but I want to warn you that you will go a step too far. I was not brought up in the woods to be scared out by an owl. You'll find it out, too. You might just as well keep your money salted away in your pockets, for you are only wasting it, in endeavoring to follow us. My prize will never be wrested from me by you, so the most sensible thing you can do is to turn your face eastward and take the back trail, for just so sure as you persist in following us, you will just so surely come to grief. A word to the wise, is sufficient."

"Yours Fraternally,

"MORA MONK."

"Well, that's what I call nerve!" Dick said, to himself.

"But, you wait, Mr. Monk! I'll rattle your nerves for you, before I'm done with you. You'll find I'm not one of the kind that takes the back trail, not much!"

He went and showed the letter to Mr. Edwards.

"Do you think we will overtake them?"

"That's hard to say. Now that Monk knows he is followed, he is likely to be more wide awake than ever."

"Yes, that's so. If he does not remain in St. Louis, where do you think he will aim for next, Mr. Bristol?"

"Denver."

"And then on to 'Frisco?"

"Possibly."

Half an hour later they were booming along at high speed.

CHAPTER VIII.

ST. LOUIS AND BEYOND.

THE trip to St. Louis was devoid of special incident, and when the pursuers arrived there, they at once sought the Planter's Hotel, and engaged accommodations.

Dick and Billy then set forth on a tour of observation, Mr. Edwards remaining at the hotel.

Dick and Billy visited every hotel of any importance in the city; but none of their Registers contained the name of Mora Monk.

"Guess it's no go, boss," said Billy.

"So it seems, as far as St. Louis is concerned."

"Where do you expect we will find 'em?"

"That is something I don't know. Possibly in Denver."

"Shall we go there next?"

"Yes, I think so, if Edwards is well enough to travel. There appears to be no use of remaining here."

They returned to the hotel and reported their ill success.

Mr. Edwards was beginning to grow discouraged, that was evident. He was moody, and at times was sullen. His expectations of speedily finding his daughter was beginning to have the effect of making him irritable.

But off for the great Colorado city they soon were, and on arrival they registered at the Windsor.

"Now, Mr. Edwards, you remain here, and keep yourself as quiet as possible. We will be able to do this town in half a day, and if there are no new developments, we shall be ready to go on to-night."

"But, where to?"

"I can tell better later on."

"Do you fancy anything would result in a visit to Leadville?"

"Possibly. I have already thought of it, and if we fail here, would suggest a visit there."

"Well, go ahead. Do the best you can."

Every hotel in Denver was visited, and the

registers duly examined, but without disclosing the name of Mora Monk.

On their return to the Windsor they found Mr. Edwards in conversation with a gentleman of commanding appearance, whom he introduced as Mr. Steele, the detective, from New York.

Steele was a middle-aged man, with blue eyes and sandy hair and was inclined to corpulence.

"Much to my surprise I stumbled across Mr. Steele shortly after you left!" Mr. Edwards said, "and from his report I find that he has been skirmishing over the same route that we have."

"With what success?"

"None," Steele replied. "Several times I have been morally certain I was on the right track, but it has invariably proven a false alarm!"

"Do you fancy that Monk steered West?"

"Yes, I do."

"What grounds have you for this opinion?"

"Well, in the first place it would not be safe for him to remain in the East, as an encounter with Edwards, here, would likely lead to unpleasant results. In the second place, the mining towns of the far West are sort of Elysian fields for fakirs, such as magicians, mesmerists, and the like. If he has got the girl under his control, most likely he would not hesitate to make money out of her, by placing her on exhibition."

"Then, too," continued Steele, "I feel that there is another scoundrel in this plotting against you and your daughter."

"I think the same," asserted Dick.

"Yes, and I'mbettin' that Jack Heath is the party number two, and bringin' up the rear, he keeps Monk posted to our every movement!"

This from Billy Bucket.

"Billy, I agree with you. That scamp does not mean any of us good, and while Mr. Steele and I pursue the trail, you must remain with Mr. Edwards, and watch over his welfare as a sentinel. The villain will not hesitate at any crime, I'm thinking, that will stop the pursuit."

"I am afraid I won't pan out fer much account as a defender," Billy said.

"Oh! yes you will. The chief thing to do is to see that Mr. Edwards keeps in his room."

"Well, all right. But, if he insurges, and goes out, I won't be responsible fer what happens, boss. Ef ye run across two or three funeral processions, on your way back, you can go to the nearest mournin' store, and invest yer spare cash in crapes."

"I guess matters will not terminate so disastrously, Billy," said Mr. Edwards smiling.

And so it was arranged. Billy was to remain with Mr. Edwards, and keep a sharp lookout for any signs of the enemy, while Dick and Steele were to recanvass the city in search of a clew.

CHAPTER IX.

BILLY'S CRIME.

DEADWOOD DICK found Steele quite a sociable companion, and very intelligent.

According to his account, he had had over ten years experience, and was pretty well versed concerning the various crooks of the land, and had landed a considerable number of them in prison.

Some of his hauls were especially notorious.

"Your belief, then, is that this Jack Heath, of whom you spoke, is in league with Mora Monk, the mesmerist."

"I don't think it—I know it. He has persistently dogged us from point to point, and I do not doubt that he is now in Denver."

"But, what is his object?"

"Plain enough. Evelyn Edwards has disappeared, under Monk's care. The chances are large that she will never be found!"

"Yes. Well?"

"Well, with her disappeared her trunks, containing her private fortune, in money, bonds and jewels. If she is under Monk's control this fortune will fall into his hands. There is no question but what this Monk is an unscrupulous devil, and, after he tires of her, she will die an alleged natural death, and a certificate of her demise will be turned over to Jack Heath and Lew Edwards. Malcolm Edwards, our client, will have met with some accident depriving him of his life, very suddenly, and thus Jack and Lew will succeed to his immense wealth. That's my diagnosis."

"Well, it sounds rather strong; still, I don't know but there may be something in it. The matter is certainly invested with an air of mystery, and if this Jack Heath has been dogging you, it is reasonable to believe that he has an object in so doing. Do you think he contemplates murdering his uncle?"

"Yes, I do!"

"Then you were wise to leave your boy as

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guard over the man. I infer that he is qualified for this important duty?"

"Yes, fully. I've put him to the test several times, and never found him wanting."

They visited some of the minor hotels, but with no result.

"It's no use," said Dick. "We will not find them in Denver, I am positive."

"Well, it don't look likely. Have you ever been in Pueblo?"

"Once."

"How do you think that would pan out?"

"Well, I don't think much of it. However, we can try it."

"Well, we can't start 'till morning, so we will have time to rest. After Pueblo, I s'pose we had better tackle Leadville?"

"Yes. It can do no harm."

They returned to the hotel.

Edwards was alone in his room reading a newspaper, but Billy was not on guard.

"Where is Billy?" Dick demanded, on perceiving the absence of his young apprentice. "I ordered him to stay here with you, Mr. Edwards!"

"I know you did, and he heeded your orders about as much as a bluejay would have done," replied Edwards. "You had not been gone more than ten minutes, when, as he stood gazing out of the window, he suddenly cried out 'There he goes!' and darted from the room, hatless. I got to the window, but was too late, for I could see nothing of the young man."

"He evidently saw Jack Heath."

"I presume so. He never saw Monk?"

"No, nor I."

"Then our theory concerning Jack's connection with the plot cannot be far out of the way?"

"No. I am sure of it," Dick replied.

"But, won't the kid spoil the whole racket for us?" inquired Steele, anxiously.

"Leave him alone!" said Dick. "I'd give him the palm over six out of ten of average professional detectives young as he is."

"Well, all we can do, I suppose, is, await his return."

"Yes, that is all."

But, it proved to be a long wait, for night had set in, dark and rainy, ere Billy put in an appearance.

And such a looking Billy he was!

He looked as if he had just passed through a prize fight, and came out second best.

It was Billy Bucket, with his clothes covered with mud—Billy Bucket, with one eye blacked and his face liberally scratched.

Evidently he had been in a desperate conflict.

"Well! well!" ejaculated Dick, "where have you been, young man? I ordered you to stay here with Mr. Edwards, didn't I?"

"Guess you did, boss."

"Well, why didn't you mind?"

"Cause I got my eye onto Mr. Jack, and I concluded et war my duty ter foller him, and see which way and where he went."

"You followed him, then?"

"You bet I did."

"Where to?"

Billy did not reply immediately, but took a survey of himself in the glass.

"Where to," repeated Dick. "Why don't you answer me?"

"Well, ef you must know," replied Billy, "I follerred him to his death. He will never bother you again!"

"The dickens you say! Explain yourself, boy!"

"Well, there ain't much to explain. He led me a long chase and right out in the country, as if on purpose to get me in chancery. When we was 'way out of town, he turned and made for me. I didn't run, and when he rushed up we clinched. Neither of us were armed, and so we had to fight it out with our dukes, an' it was a fight as was a fight, too. The cuss swore he'd strangle me, and so I arrived at the conclusion that if that was his game it was as fair for me as for him."

"He was bigger and stronger than I, and ye wouldn't have believed I'd have stood a ghost of a show, but you kin bet I fought fer all I was worth. I knew it was life or death with me, an' I wasn't ready to turn up my toes yet."

"Finally, I got a grip on the throat of the son-of-a-gun, and I didn't let go till he was a goner. I suppose I'm guilty of havin' committed a murder, and if I have to hang, hang it is. But I only did what I did in self-defense."

"There were no witnesses to the struggle, were there?" inquired Edwards.

"None."

"Then you are safe; for none of us are likely to give you away."

Billy drew a breath of relief.

"That's all right, then," he said, "and I reckon I can do ye a turn in repayment. Read this! I found it on Jack's person, after I had settled him."

It was a piece of paper of yellowish tint, sized about three by four inches.

It contained the engraved portrait of a man, and at the top were these words:

PROFESSOR MONK,

THE WORLD'S GREATEST MESMERIST.

While at the bottom was printed the following:

CARTER'S HALL, LEADVILLE.

One Week Only.

There was, however, no date, but the ragged edge of the bottom of the paper evidenced that it had been torn away.

"Is this a correct picture of Monk?" asked Dick, handing the picture to Edwards.

"Yes—a very correct likeness. So they are in Leadville?"

"It would seem so, by this."

"Then let us start, at once, ere they elude us again."

"No train leaves for Leadville until to-morrow morning."

"Why not telegraph to the chief of police there to arrest Monk, and hold him in custody until our arrival?"

"I don't favor that plan," replied Dick, "for, in case Monk has got hold of your daughter's money, which is more than likely, he could furnish his own bail, and escape before we could get there."

"I don't believe he would think so far."

"Humph! You leave him alone for a cunning rogue. No; the only thing we can do is to wait till to-morrow, and then descend upon him when he is giving one of his performances. He will then have no opportunity for escape, and we shall recover your daughter."

And so they settled themselves down to the inevitable fate of spending another night in Denver.

Billy Bucket was, without doubt, the most unhappy member of the quartette.

Thoughts of the crime he had been forced to commit preyed heavily upon his mind, and he started at every sound, as if haunted.

"I shall never know a moment's rest or peace again," he declared, lugubriously.

"Don't think of the affair more than you can help, and it will pass out of your mind," consoled Dick.

"Never, boss, never! I shall always see those bulgin' eyes staring at me, same as when I was choking him."

And all Dick or the others could say, failed to overcome the boy's depression of spirit. He would not go to bed, but sat all night by the window.

Every once in a while he would moan and shudder; then he would get up and pace the floor.

The next morning, at an early hour, the party started for Leadville.

CHAPTER X.

THE LEADVILLE LAIR.

THE journey to Leadville was peculiar in more respects than one—peculiar, because the quartette indulged in little conversation; peculiar because the entire trip was accomplished through a terrific thunder-storm that made the day dark, dismal and disgusting.

If there is one country or section of country, more than another, where lightning gets in its work with a vengeance, give the palm to Colorado.

What with the wind and the rain portable things are bound to dance a jig, and the atmosphere is so charged with electricity that it is dangerous to carry any steel weapons about one's person. The mountain hunters and prospectors almost invariably lay aside their weapons during a severe thunder-storm.

When the train arrived at Pueblo, the party were notified to change cars, but were also informed that the train for Leadville would not start for several hours owing to a washout up the road.

It rained too hard to venture about the town much. Dick, however, took a brief look, but found nothing going on to particularly attract his attention except in one instance, and this happened merely by chance.

He dropped into a tobacconist's to get a cigar, and there espied a handbill tacked up against the wall. It proved to be an advertisement of

Professor Monk's appearance at De Ramer's Opera House several days previous, for "positively one night only."

Dick turned to the proprietor of the store after reading the bill.

"Did this man appear in Pueblo as announced?" he inquired.

"He did."

"Did you witness his performance?"

"Yes. He had a full house, and gave a very creditable entertainment."

"Was he accompanied by a young lady, whom he introduced in his performance?"

"Not that I am aware of. No young lady appeared upon the stage."

"Do you know where this man went on leaving here?"

"No, I do not, but I should presume to Leadville, as that is a pretty good show-town."

He returned to the train to find Edwards and Steele were playing euchre, and Billy asleep.

"Any news?" asked Edwards.

"Monk has recently played here, and has probably gone on to Leadville."

"Would to God we were there now!"

But it was fully four hours ere the journey was resumed, and it was far in the night when the train pulled into the mountain city.

The next day was a repetition of the previous one, with the exception that the storm was less fierce. The rain came down steadily and a nasty fog overhung the mountain metropolis, as dense, nearly, as those for which London is famous.

The dawn of the new day found Mr. Edwards laboring under a severe cold, and unable to be out of doors.

Steele had the jumping toothache, and he didn't care about braving the elements.

While, as for Billy, he was silent and gloomy.

Leaving his companions domiciled at the hotel, and securing a good waterproof overcoat, by depositing double its value in money, as security, Dick set forth to investigate, alone.

As he struck out into the rain-swept streets, Dick evidently had decided on his course of procedure.

"I think it will work," he said, to himself.

"If this Monk is such a profound rascal that instead of having the girl with him, he has hidden her away, this plan might work admirably. First, I wonder if I can find my old friend, Rachel."

Rachel Cohen, it will be remembered, by the regular readers of the "Deadwood Dick" Series, was the young Jewess, for whom Dick played the part of pawnbroker, under the alias of Jacobs.

The walk to the locality of the pawnshop was not a long one, and Dick soon entered it.

A young man greeted him from behind the counter, with—

"What can I do for you, sir?"

"I would like to see Miss Cohen?"

"Miss Cohen? No such a person here."

"Then the place must have changed hands."

"No, sir. It is still run by the same party as opened it."

"Then, tell the young woman who runs it, that Mr. Bristol would like to see her."

Before the young man could enter the rear room, Rachel came forth, behind the counter, radiant with smiles, and extended her hand.

"Ah! Mr. Bristol! Is it really you? I thought I recognized your voice when you asked for me. I never expected to see you again. How have you been?"

"In pretty fair health, thank you. And, how about yourself?"

"Oh! splendid!"

"I infer that you are married?"

"Oh! yes, to the real Mr. Jacobs. I am sorry he is not here, so I can make you two acquainted. Are you still following your profession?"

"Yes. I begin to doubt if I shall ever leave it for good. No sooner I get through with one case than another turns up."

"And, Billy, what has become of him?"

"Oh! he is here."

"I am so glad! I would love to see him!"

"Well, I'll send him around. By the way, where is Carter's Hall?"

"On this street, two blocks up."

"A theater?"

"No, a beer garden, where variety performances are given."

"Is there a mesmericist there this week?"

"Yes, one Professor Monk."

"Have you seen him?"

"No, I have not."

"Do you know at what hotel he stops?"

"The Clarendon, I heard some one say."

So, to Carter's Hall he proceeded. It proved

to be an ordinary beer resort and concert garden, many of which flourish in the mountain city.

It was a large, barn-like place, with high ceiling and roughly-plastered walls.

There was a long bar, and a plenitude of chairs and tables scattered about.

In one corner was a large orchestrion.

There was also a small stage at the rear, upon which vaudeville performances were given every night.

But few customers were in the place when Dick entered, and most of these were seated at the tables.

The proprietor presided behind the bar, assisted by several waiters.

As Dick purchased a cigar, he asked:

"Is Professor Monk about, sir?"

"He is not."

"About what time do you expect him?"

"Not before to-night."

"Do you know where he can be found?"

"I do. He told me he was going out to see his parents."

"Where do they live?"

"Way out on the borders of the city. I don't allow, however, that you'll be able to find the spot, unless you are familiar with the city, which I take it you are not. If your business is of importance enough, you had better get a guide."

"My business is of considerable importance, as I would like to engage the professor for a tour in the extreme Northwest. How long is he under contract with you?"

"One week."

"Do you know if he has any after dates?"

"No, I do not; but I don't think he has. In fact, I think he intends going to Australia from here."

"Then I must see him without delay. Can you tell me where I will find a guide?"

"Yes," and the proprietor beckoned to a boot-black who had a stand in the saloon.

"Here, Mike! Do you know where old Monk, the miser, lives?"

"Yes, me know quita well."

"All right, then. You show this gentleman to the place, and he will make it right for you."

"Alla right."

"Before I go," said Dick, "would you mind giving me a letter of introduction to the professor? I am John Busby, son of Hiram Busby, one of the wealthiest business men of Helena, Montana."

"Certainly; I shall be most happy to accommodate you."

"You may also mention that I control the Northern theatrical circuit."

So Mr. Carter wrote out a very clever letter of recommendation and presented it to Dick, after which the detective and his guide took their departure.

It was still raining, and, as Michael Angelo Pirazzo stated that their destination was some little distance out, Dick chartered a carriage, and in due time they drew up before a rough board house on the outskirts of the town. It was a dismal spot, there being not another habitation within a quarter of a mile.

Dick got out of the conveyance, and directed the driver to take Mike back to Carter's Hall, and return for him (Dick) in about an hour.

So the carriage rolled away, and Dick approached the house and rapped upon the door, but was obliged to rap several times ere any one answered the summons.

Then a frowsy-headed, hatchet-faced old woman, who eyed Dick sullenly, demanded:

"What d'yer want?"

"I called to see Professor Monk on a matter of business."

"Well, ye can't see him."

"Why not, pray?"

"Cause he ain't receivin' no visitors."

"But my business is important. I want to engage him for a tour. Won't you be kind enough to hand him this letter of introduction?"

The old virago snatched the letter from Dick's hand, with a grunt of displeasure, and slammed the door in his face.

She was gone several minutes, leaving Dick standing in the rain.

After a time, she re-opened the door.

"Come in!" she said tersely.

Dick entered, by no means sorry to get in out of the wet.

The room he entered, evidently a general living apartment, was poorly furnished, dirty and foul smelling.

The only cheerful thing about the place, was a log fire on the hearth.

A rickety staircase led from this room to the floor above.

"So ye'r a theater chap, aire ye?" asked the old woman, grimly.

"Yes."

"An' how comes et ye want my boy?"

"Because I have heard he was a clever performer, and we seldom have anything of the sort up in the North."

"How long do ye want him for?"

"I can judge better when I see him in person," Dick replied.

"Well, ye go up them stairs, and rap at the first door, and I guess he will receive you, tho' he don't often receive strangers."

"Thank you," and the detective proceeded to clamber up the creaking stairs.

What adventure now lay before him?

On reaching the floor above, Dick rapped on the first door.

"Come in!" cried a not unpleasant voice, and opening the door, Dick stepped within, to find himself in a dingy room, which did not even boast of a window, the light being supplied by a lighted lamp upon a rough table.

At this table sat Mora Monk.

He looked quite like the engraving on the paper Billy had found, except that he had evidently not made the acquaintance of a barber, for several days."

"How do you do?" the professor saluted, rising and extending his hand. "I don't think I ever had the honor of meeting you before!"

"No, I reckon not. I heard of you in Pueblo, and thought I'd take a little run up here, and see you."

"Exactly. Take a seat, and make yourself at home. Here! have a glass of cognac, for I see you are wet. Terrible weather, isn't it?"

"Pretty tough," Dick replied, as he took the beverage, which he was glad to accept, for, in truth, he was chilled through.

"You're somewhat of a traveler, I take it?" Monk said.

"Yes, considerably so. I am pretty well posted through out the Union, especially the West. I am a sort of restless spirit, and, as a rule, I am on the go."

"I understand, by my mother, and also by Carter's letter, that you are desirous of engaging an attraction for a northwestern tour?"

"Well, yes. I propose making a trip, partly for profit and partly for pleasure, and, as fakirs like magicians, ventriloquists, mesmerists and the like are not common, I thought by engaging a good attraction I might be able to pay expenses and have a good time, too."

"Humph! I see!" replied Mr. Monk, with a toss of the head. "Your scheme may prove all right, but, as I am not a fakir, I cannot enter into it. I am a legitimate, and never was classified as fakir before. I am a hall performer. Fakirs are simply hangers-on after a traveling circus."

"Well, excuse me, if I offended you. I was not aware of the distinction. The show I propose to run must cater to the best patronage."

"Well, then, no doubt I can suit you."

"What are your terms per week?"

"For how long?"

"Eight weeks."

"One hundred and fifty dollars a week and all expenses."

"How many people do you carry with you? I suppose you must have some!"

"I have a good subject for my mesmeric demonstrations whom I could take along if required. It would increase the expenses one hundred dollars a week."

"Male or female?"

"A young lady, of whom I have been appointed guardian by a relative of mine!"

"Can I see her?"

"No, not at present, as she is not here. She has gone to visit a friend in the city—a birthday party I believe it is—and she will not be back until late."

"What is her name?"

"Her stage name?"

"No, her real name."

"That I do not care to divulge. Her stage pseudonym is Mademoiselle Lucille."

The frankness with which Monk answered rather puzzled Dick; he could hardly understand it.

Here was one of the most consummate of villains playing his part as though he were an honest man!

One thing was sure: he was not a man to be caught napping.

"Well," said Dick, "two hundred and fifty a week will secure the both of you, eh?"

"Yes."

"Very good. You come with me to the hotel and we will fix up a contract."

"That is not necessary. I have some blank

contracts which can be filled out here. You wait here; I'll get them," and, arising, Monk left the room.

As he did so, Dick heard the key turn in the lock!

"Caged!" he muttered.

CHAPTER XI.

FREE AGAIN.

It was not more than Dick might have expected.

He had set Monk down as a skilled scoundrel, practiced in all the arts of deception, and an inventor of artifices of a villainous nature that were generally successful.

Monk had played his little game pleasantly and politely, and, as a result, Dick was locked in.

How was he to get out?

The door was too heavy to break down and there were no windows.

The candle was near burned out, and soon the detective would be left in total darkness.

He began to grow desperate.

Monk had now the best of the race. He could take his prize, and be nearly out of the State ere Dick could gain his liberty.

"I ought to be mauled," muttered Dick. "I'll be blamed if I ever made such a botch of a job before."

He wrenched at the door. It was a heavy affair built of spruce pine, and hung on heavy hinges. The lock was also a ponderous piece of mechanism.

Escape, except through outside aid, was impossible.

He was as much a prisoner as though in jail.

And while thus confined, where was Mora Monk?

Making good his escape!

The thought was maddening.

Rising, Dick went to the door, and began to kick upon it.

Presently he heard some one in the hall, outside.

"Stop kicking that door!" cried the old woman's voice.

"Let me out," replied Dick.

"I can't!" and then came a coarse laugh, as she added:

"Ye hadn't orter come a-snoopin' around, an' ye wouldn't have got inter trouble. Et serves ye right!"

"If you don't let me out, I'll serve you right!" Dick gritted. "Come! open that door."

"How much will you give?"

"How much do you want?"

"All I can get—say a thousand dollars. If your liberty is worth anything it is worth that."

"Not much. You must think I'm made of money."

"You've got plenty. Mora said so."

"Well, if I have, you'll not get it."

"Then, you'll not get out."

"I'll give you a hundred dollars to set me at liberty."

"And promise not to molest me?"

"Yes."

"Very well."

Then the door was opened.

Dick stepped out into the hall, and drew a roll of money from his pocket. "I'll be as good as my word," he said, "but I would be serving you right by landing you in State Prison."

"For what, pray? I've done you no injury. It was Mora who locked you in—not me. You ought to thank me for letting you out, even."

"Thanks be blowed! You don't deserve to be thanked. I am going, now, and when I find that precious son of yours again, he'll not escape me so easy."

The old woman shrugged her skinny shoulders and chuckled.

"You won't find him," she said.

"But, I will, though!"

"You can't. He's too smart to let ye catch onto him ag'in."

"We shall see. Did he take the girl with him?"

"What girl?"

"Oh! you know well enough, the one he abducted from New York."

"I don't know of any such girl."

"You lie! You do."

"I do not. There's no girl here, nor hain't been."

Dick saw it was no use to argue further. If Evelyn Edwards had been there, it was not likely she was there now; so he descended the stairs, and left the house. The back not having yet returned, he concluded to walk into Leadville.

It was still raining, and a raw wind was blowing a small-sized tornado.

When Dick was half-way back to the hotel he encountered the carriage, and was thus enabled to finish the rest of the journey under cover.

Instead of going first to the hotel, he had himself conveyed to Carter's Hall, and sought out the proprietor, whom he found enjoying a cigar.

"Ah! how do you do, Mr. Busby? Sit down and have a smile! Deuced bad day out, eh? I haven't been out, but I judge so."

"Yes, it's right nasty. Has Monk been here since I've been gone?"

"No. Didn't you see him?"

"Yes, to my sorrow."

"How's that?"

Dick explained, as briefly as possible.

"Indeed! I had no idea he was such a rascal. Do you reckon he's left town?"

"Yes. I don't believe he'd stay here, after what has happened!"

"Then, I'm out, too."

"How so?"

"I advanced him part of his salary, as he claimed to be broke."

"How much?"

"A hundred!"

Dick laughed.

"That's the last you'll see of your cash!" he said. "Ere this, Monk is well away from here. But, I'll have him yet."

"I hope so."

"I'm sure of it."

On his arrival at the hotel Dick found his friends anxiously awaiting his return—for he had really been gone longer than he supposed.

"Ah! I am glad to see you back," said Mr. Edwards, rising and extending his hand. "Did you find him?"

"Yes."

"Ah! capital! And the scoundrel at last is safe under lock and key?"

"No, he is not."

"Why not?"

"Because, instead of my making him a prisoner, he made me one, and then made good his escape."

Dick then proceeded to detail his adventures, and succeeded in throwing Mr. Edwards once more into a state of agonized despair.

"Well, what's to be done next?"

"Really, I don't know."

"I suggest San Francisco," said Steele.

"Well, maybe that is a good idea. He will be likely to try to get as far from here as possible, eh?"

"Sure!"

"Then San Francisco it is. Get ready at once. I will get the tickets."

And leaving the hotel, Dick hurried to the railway station.

An hour later the party were en route for the Pacific Coast.

CHAPTER XII.

JEN CLOVER.

BEFORE leaving Leadville, Dick satisfied himself that he was at last most likely on the right track.

While purchasing his tickets he said to the station-agent:

"Have you seen the wonderful mesmerist up at Carter's Hall?"

"Yes. He is pretty clever, but I've seen better."

"Do you know if he has left town or not?"

"Yes. He took the Denver special, which leaves here in advance of your train some three hours. It carries the northeastern mails."

"Do you know Monk's destination?"

"I do not—no more than that he was thinking of going to California, as he asked me what a ticket would cost from here to 'Frisco."

"I suppose he will take the Central Pacific, then, from Ogden."

"Yes."

"Thank you."

We will pass over the journey from Leadville until we find our party in Denver.

Here there was necessarily a temporary delay for the purpose of ascertaining that the rogue had not dropped off at that point to double on his track, as rogues are pretty sure to do when pursued; but Dick's inquiries of the depot men elicited no information concerning the mesmerist or his victim, and the inference was that they had not left their train.

The pursuers, therefore, took a train for Ogden, where they would have to wait until overtaken by the Central Pacific Express for San Francisco.

The journey to Ogden was devoid of any incident bearing particularly upon our story.

Steele and Mr. Edwards devoted themselves to whist, Dick gave himself up to the perusal of a novel, and, gloomy and despondent, Billy

rotated from one end of the train to the other in a vain endeavor to keep his thoughts off of his recent trouble.

When the party arrived at Ogden, they were told that a 'Frisco-bound train would be along in a couple of hours; so they took seats in the Union Depot waiting-room, where some fifty other passengers were resting.

Dick made a minute inspection of this gathering, but Monk was not there, nor any one who looked like him—which did not surprise Dick, for the train Monk had taken was a through one from Denver to San Francisco, requiring no change at Ogden.

But although Monk was discovered, another person arrested Dick's notice.

This was a young woman, who possessed the personal advantage of being remarkably handsome.

She looked to be twenty-two years of age, and was tall, finely-formed, with a graceful carriage and shapely hands and feet.

She was a pronounced brunette—so much so that it occurred to Dick she must have either Indian or Spanish blood in her veins.

Her features were of Anglo-Saxon cast.

Her eyes, and her hair, which flowed in wavy abundance over her shoulders, were as black as coal, and her glance was extremely keen and penetrating.

Her dress was of some plain black stuff, a sealskin ulster, and a jaunty little bonnet that became her very much.

The most singular thing about her was that she carried a Remington repeating-rifle, which was elegantly mounted.

Why did she go armed? Was she timid, and afraid to travel alone, unarmed?

There was nothing timid about her, that was evident. Dick would have wagered a champagne supper that she was chock full of grit, and would as soon shoot a man as look at him, if seriously offended.

Was she some mountain huntress then?

No, mountain huntresses were not in the habit of wearing sealskin coats when they tackled the grizzly, or the lurking panther.

Perhaps she was some crack-shot, traveling around the country, giving exhibitions in the vaudeville theaters.

This struck Dick as the most reasonable theory of accounting for the rifle.

Dick's attention was first attracted to her by the steady pertinacity with which she watched him; but as soon as he began to return her glances of curiosity, she arose and sauntered to the further end of the waiting-room.

"Humph!" Dick muttered, "here's an enigma! I wonder if she thinks she knows me, or would like to?"

Not the latter, certainly, for the young woman kept as much out of sight as was possible, during the remainder of the stay in Ogden.

The two hours passed quickly, and then the Central Pacific Express came rolling into the station.

At once there was a stampede to get aboard and secure good seats.

Dick did not follow, in so much of a hurry, but let most of the passengers board the train before he got on himself.

He wanted to see if the young lady of the rifle boarded this particular train.

Yes, she tripped out of the waiting room, and got on the third car, front, while Dick took the next one back of it.

This train of the Central Pacific system, is a very heavy one, and by being added to by several other roads centering into Ogden, the train in leaving that city is a huge caravan of cars, packed with passengers, as a rule, and drawn toward the Golden Gate by two and afterward three panting three-drive-wheel locomotives.

Dick was lucky enough to find a double seat that was not occupied, and proceeded to appropriate it with the sincere hope that there was not an extra passenger to appear, and lay claim to the remaining half.

Vain hope!

Just as the train was about moving, Dick discovered the young lady of the rifle, approaching, casting anxiously about her, with those piercing black eyes, in quest of a place to sit down.

"Here's a go!" muttered Dick, under his breath. "I'm in for it now!"

But, little he knew how much he was "in for it," at the instant. He found out, however, shortly.

The young lady of the rifle discovered the vacant seat, and made for it with the stride of an Amazon, and reached the seat, at the same instant as did a gaudily-dressed, heavily painted woman, a few years her senior.

"This is my seat!" said the latter, arrogantly.

"Well, I guess not," replied the young woman, wedging herself into the alley, so the other could not pass her. "It is my seat, I happened to spy it first."

"You did not!" cried the elder. "I'll have the seat, or I'll pull every hair out of your head!"

"You will, eh? Well, that happens to be a little game I graduated at when quite young," was coolly replied. "If you have any good bona-fide hair to part with, why sail in. You'll find the parson's darter to home, and the meetin' house bell all ready to toll for a funeral. I'm Jen Clover, from Missoula, and this lyer seat is mine, from now till I get clean inter the City of San Francisco. If you don't believe it, roll up your sleeves, madam, and wade right in. This is what says I occupy this bit of space, till I git good and ready to vacate!" and the maid from Missoula shoved a "six'er" under madam's nose. "Now, then, mosey, and try the bluff game on some one that didn't get their eye-teeth cut up in Missoula, Montana. Git!"

And madam got, for she glided more rapidly than gracefully into the next car.

The young woman from Missoula then turned to Dick.

"Well, partner, have you any objections to me settin' here? If you have, sing out. It wasn't so much the seat I wanted, but, I was jest bound that that critter, with an inch of kalsomine on her face, wasn't goin' to have that seat, nor she didn't!"

"The seat is at the disposal of whoever takes it first, I suppose," Dick replied. "As the other party has quit the field, it's your next chance."

"All right. It's a go!"

And with this, Miss Jen Clover seated herself with an air of victory and complete satisfaction.

CHAPTER XIII.

JEN CLOVER DROPS.

DICK was undecided whether to feel pleased with his new traveling companion. Certain it was she had enough assurance for a Tombs lawyer and was not bashful about betraying the fact.

Born and brought up in the Wild West, and reared most likely under the roughest of circumstances, it was little wonder she was an Amazon, or "a cayuse on wheels," as she termed it.

"It's wonderful what gall some women do have!" she observed. "For two pins, I'd have salivated that stuck-up critter. Going tar!"

"Yes—to 'Frisco!"

"So am I, so we'll be company for each other. Ever been to 'Frisco?"

"Yes."

"Perty nice place, eh?"

"I think so."

"Bigger'n Ogden?"

"Yes, considerably."

"What's yer name, may I ask?"

"Certainly. My name is Dick Bristol, otherwise, Deadwood Dick!"

"Jerusalem! Not the detective?"

"The same."

"Why, hang it, I've heard of you lots of times, I have. You're quite a cuss on wheels, if all is true what is said about you. What aire you goin' to 'Frisco for?"

"Some private business, which I am not disposed to make public, Miss Clover."

"Humph! Ye needn't bitch no miss-handle to my name. I'm simply jest plain Jen Clover, an' that's all. Them as wants miss tied to their names, kin have it, for all I care; I don't. So you are goin' to 'Frisco on private business, eh? Some new detective racket, I suppose?"

"Perhaps—perhaps not."

"Well, ye needn't tell, if ye don't want to, fer I don't care a button, anyhow. I'm goin' to 'Frisco to kill a man, if I can find him. That's why I brought the rifle along."

"Murder is pretty serious business, don't you know that?"

"I don't care. If I can only get a bead on this villain, I'll lay him low if they swing me, the next minute."

"You must have some strong reason for this murderous pursuit."

"So I have. The scoundrel won my love, got my money, and then deserted me on the plea that I wasn't a reputable woman. Smarting under this shameful treatment I swore to have his life, and have followed ever since, and shall never leave the trail until my mission is fulfilled, and that scoundrel is dead and buried."

"Do you expect to find your man in San Francisco?" Dick asked.

"Yes. He left Ogden on the train before this, but I missed the train, and had to wait over. But, oh! I'll overtake him, never fear,

and when I do, he'll take a drop to himself, you mark my word!"

"But, what will it benefit you to take his life?" asked Dick.

"It will be that much benefit, that I will have had my revenge. Old Clover's gal is no slouch, if she was brought up on bear meat."

"What is the name of your betrayer?"

"Mora Monk!"

Dick started.

"The deuce you say!" he ejaculated. "Why, this is a singular coincidence. I am also gunning after that very individual. I don't suppose there can be two persons of that name?"

"Not likely. What are you after the scoundrel for, may I ask?"

"For abduction. But there must be some mistake, some confusion about this matter. The Monk I am after was in New York, only a few days ago, where he abducted a young lady and fled West."

"The same man. He suddenly left New York, learning that I was in town, and searching for him."

"Is this man of yours a mesmerist?"

"Not as I know of."

"Would you recognize his picture if you were to see it?"

"Certainly. It is not likely I'd ever forget his face, curse him!"

Dick then drew the slip of paper from his pocket, which contained the engraved portrait of the illustrious professor, and gave it to Jen Clover.

"How about this?"

"That's him! That's the scoundrel who deserted me, and whom I have chased all over the United States."

"Well, that is the man I'm after!"

"Singular, isn't it, that we should meet, who are both angling for the same sucker?"

"Well, yes, rather. It appears that this chap is an all-around villain."

"Villain is too good a name for him. He is a very imp of Satan. Tell me of the abduction."

Dick did so, and Jen Clover listened, attentively.

"Poor girl!" she said, "she has indeed fallen into bad hands."

"Have you any idea where to look for Monk, in 'Frisco?"

"No. All I know is that he has a sister there, by the name of Mrs. Townsend, but what street she lives on, I don't know."

"Do you know her husband's name?"

"Yes. It is Horace."

"What is his business?"

"A tea merchant, I believe."

"Then," said Dick, "I think we can safely consider ourselves on the trail."

"How will you go at it?"

"First, by consulting a Business Directory and obtaining the address of this Mr. Horace Townsend, and finding out his place of business, and residence, and then, by shadowing the latter, ascertain if Monk is a member of the household. If I get my eyes on him again he shall not escape me."

"If I get my eyes on him he will escape no one," said Jen Clover, vengefully. "His doom is irrevocably sealed."

"You must promise me one thing!" said Deadwood Dick, sternly.

"I take 'must' from no man, mister. Tell me what it is you want, however, and I will endeavor to accommodate you."

"Promise me not to make an attempt on Monk's life, until I have found and rescued Evelyn Edwards. Were Monk to be cut off short, we might never be able to find the girl."

Jen was silent a moment, as if hesitating to forego her vengeance, but finally said:

"It shall be as you wish!"

Dick now decided to hunt up his friend and so left Jen the sole occupant of the seat.

Night had already settled down like a pall, and at an early hour of the evening, the man-hunters retired to a sleeping-car, and went to rest.

They did not awaken until quite late the next morning, and by this time were well along on their journey.

They had breakfast in the dining-car, and then returned to the sleeper, where Dick left the party, and took a trip through the train to see if Jen Clover were still on board.

But, he failed to find her.

"She's still in the sleeping-car, I presume," he mused.

Still, on second thought, he questioned the conductor.

"Yes, I remember the party," said that official. "Carried a gun, didn't she?"

"Yes."

"Black eyes and hair?"

"Yes."

"Well, she got a stop-over, and stopped off at Elko, forty miles back, on signal!"

Dick shut his teeth hard together.

"Baffled again!" he muttered. "She was a confederate of Monk!"

CHAPTER XIV.

CONCLUSION.

The disappearance of the Clover girl not only surprised, but annoyed the detective.

He had depended somewhat upon her assistance in finding Monk, on their arrival in San Francisco. Once in his grip he would lodge him in jail, and thus save the girl from committing a murder.

But, now that Jen Clover had disappeared, and the conductor asserted that she had gotten off the train at Elko, it was but natural for Dick to decide that her entire story was a lie, and that she was a colleague of this diabolical wretch, Mora Monk.

Questioning the conductor, Dick found that the train would not stop again, until they arrived at Winnemucca, one hundred and forty-four miles distant.

Dick had said nothing of his encounter with the woman, to the other members of his party, and did not consider it necessary to do so, now.

The train would reach Winnemucca at mid-day, and there would connect with a train eastward bound, toward Elko.

If the party wanted to take the back track, this was their chance. That chance Dick promptly decided to take and so informed his employer and confederate. All were surprised at this new turn in affairs, but consented to leave the train at Winnemucca.

Yet Mr. Edwards was doubtful.

"I don't see the object of this move, Bristol," he said, when they had alighted on the platform. "Have you given up the race?"

"No. Do I look like a man who gives up?"

"I infer, then, that it is useless to question you."

"Practically speaking, I will say yes."

That settled it, and Mr. Edwards withheld any further inquiry.

The east-bound train arrived in the course of half an hour, and our party boarded it.

The journey back to Elko was a dreary one, for it had begun to rain again, and everybody seemed out of sorts.

Billy, especially, bad the blues, and all attempts to cheer him up were futile.

"Dick!" he said, "you've done a lot for me, and I won't never be able to pay ye fer it, likely. But, I'll allus think of ye, and remember you as the best friend I ever had!"

"Why, what's the matter, Billy. What do you mean?"

"I mean that we part," was the reply. "I'm going back to New York, and resume my old business. I'm not cut out for your profession."

This naturally gave Dick food for more speculation and worryment.

Might not this stop off at Elko have been only a *ruse*?—a scheme to delay the progress of the party to 'Frisco?—for, while Dick was on his return to Elko, Jen Clover could easily pass him on the way by a Westward-bound train, and reach 'Frisco hours ahead of him.

He pondered anxiously and in silence, as the train rolled on; not one of his party guessed how dispirited he was.

At last, after what seemed an interminable period, the conductor yelled out:

"Elko!"

"We get off here!" Dick announced, to his companions.

"What for?"

"Never mind what for. I have reasons of sufficient importance."

The others regarded him doubtfully.

"Why this is only a little station!" interposed Steele.

"That matters not. I get off here. If the rest of you want to go on do so."

And with this Deadwood Dick grabbed his grip, and left the train—all hurriedly following, not knowing, apparently what else to do.

Elko is a dry, dozy little settlement, and about the biggest excitement they ever have there, is a dog-fight.

Dick approached the station-agent, a big being with a pipe in his mouth, and his pants in his boots.

"Are you the agent?" asked Dick.

"Yas," was the reply.

"Do many passengers get off at this place?"

"Darned few."

"In the last two days, how many have arrived here?"

"Waal, countin' you-'uns—let me see—I reckon about seven, tho' I wouldn't sw'ar to et!"

"Can you describe these parties?"

"Waal, I ain't much of a descriptivist, partner, but I allow that the first two which landed yesterday were a man and a gal. The man was ruther a good-lookin' chap."

"And the young woman?"

"Give et up. She was enveloped in a rubber overcoat with a hood on et—fer et war rainin' like thunder—and thar was a vail over her mug so one couldn't see what she looked like. Her figger, tho', was purty fair, an' I allow she war a ruther young spring chicken."

"Who was the third party that came?"

"Didn't know her no more 'n I did t'other 'uns. She carried a gun, and, as mine war tew home, I war perlite as I c'u'd be. I've no use fer a gun when I don't hold it myself. Hey you?"

"Well, to tell the truth, I generally prefer to hold the gun myself. Do you know where these parties went?"

"Well, I reckon. Ther's few things 'bout this town that I don't know."

"Well, where did they go?"

"To Mack's."

"Where is that?"

"Yander," and the finger of the burly station-agent pointed to a rough-looking abode two hundred yards away.

It was a suspicious-looking place, at the best, but, then, nearly every residence in the town wore the same rough and tough appearance.

"The first two parties went there?" said Dick.

"Yes."

"And the third one? Where did she go?"

"She went thar, too."

"Have you seen any of them since?"

"I have not."

"What kind of a place is this Mack's?"

"Waal, stranger, I ain't much fer talkin' ag'in' my neighbors, but 'twixt you an' me, I'd advise tenderfeet ter keep away from that place o' Mack's. Thar's sum purty hard citizens hangs out thar, and, as fer Mack's scruples, ye could chuck 'em all away in a needle's eye!"

"Thanks, for your information. Is ther a sheriff in this town?"

"A what?" and the station-agent looked dumfounded.

"A sheriff, I said," replied Dick. "Don't you know what a sheriff is?"

"Waal, yes. But, ther' ain't none about these immeget parts. They don't thrive beer, for a cent. The only law dispenser we've got is a constable, and he lives sixteen miles out o' town, and only comes in when he wants ter get his demijohn filled. We was thinkin' of electin' a mayor an' board o' aldermen, but that boddle racket in New York changed our views completely."

Dick bade his companions remain in the waiting-room of the depot, and then went to Mack's, over whose door he perceived a sign that informed him it was a public house.

There was but one front door. This Dick opened, and entered a small room containing a bar, and a few chairs and tables.

Three persons were in the room. They were Mora Monk, Jen Clover and an old woman, whom Dick concluded was the proprietress of the place.

The attitudes and appearances of the trio seemed to indicate that they were, or had been, holding a quarrelsome discussion.

The entrance of Deadwood Dick, however, brought matters to a climax—the very climax that draws our story to a close.

The instant that Monk laid eyes on the detective, his hand flew to his hip-pocket, and when withdrawn held an ugly-looking revolver.

"Now, you detective hound, you will find what you want, and get your just deserts in the bargain!"

With that he raised his revolver to fire, but his intended victim was not the victim.

Jen Clover sprung forward, grasped the hand that held the revolver, and, with a sudden twist, turned the muzzle backward.

There was a sharp report, and the villain fell to the floor, shot in the breast.

"I am avenged!" exclaimed Jen, turning to Dick. "I saved your life! You will find the young lady in the next room, yonder. You have no further use for me, so I will go," and giving one savage glance at the stricken man on the floor, Jen Clover took her departure.

A search of the house resulted in the discovery of Evelyn Edwards. She was in a sort of

dazed condition as if under a spell—evidently recognizing Dick, but giving him a perfectly passionless greeting.

He at once divined the nature of the case. She was and had been for a long time under the mesmeric influence of the scoundrel who had led her away, and that spell could only be dissolved by the mesmerist's own act and will power.

Returning to the room where he lay, the detective found him wholly conscious, but life fast ebbing away.

"Monk, you know me?" bending over the man.

The wretch opened his eyes.

"Yes, I understand. Have you found her?" he asked, in a feeble voice.

"She is in there, but under the influence of your power. As the only reparation you can make, before you go into the presence of your Maker, you must release her from your malign spell and restore her unharmed to her father. Will you be man enough to do this?" and Dick bent over the abductor, his eyes fastened on him with intense, commanding earnestness.

Monk seemed fairly to writhe under the influence of that gaze; he was in the grasp of a will strong as his own.

He hesitated: then turned away.

"Speak out! I command you!" and Dick's voice was terrible in its intense feeling.

"I—cannot!" murmured the villain.

"You dare not carry my curse, and her curse, and her father's curse with you! Will her to be free again! Dare to disobey, and, by Heaven, I will roast you before you die and send you howling into the other world!" and he gripped the shoulder, turning Monk face upward, to meet those blazing eyes.

The wretch shivered and paled to the pallor of a corpse, then slowly said, in a firm voice:

"Evelyn! Do you hear?"

A brief pause.

"Evelyn, I release you! I am longer no your master! Go, and forever be free from my influence!" and, having seemingly spent his strength in this exertion of his marvelous will power, he closed his eyes and sunk into complete insensibility.

The door opened, and Evelyn glided into the room, surprise, consternation, dread written on her face, but that dazed look wholly gone!

Dick comprehended in an instant the truth: the poor girl was indeed released from Monk's malign and terrible hypnotic control; and advancing and taking her hand, the now delighted detective led her at once out on the street.

"Where are we, Mr.—Mr.—" and she stopped, refusing to go further.

"You are with your friends once more, Miss Edwards. I am Richard Bristol, the detective, and have at last rescued you from the power of that human devil, Mora Monk. Your father awaits you at the station. Will you not be glad to see him and to go home again?"

"Oh, yes! take me home and let me rest. I am so tired—so tired!" and Dick caught her, to prevent her from falling to the ground.

"Be of good heart, Miss Evelyn! All will be well," he encouraged. "Let us get away from this vile place as soon as possible."

Slowly they wended their way back to the station, where the three were waiting in great uneasiness the result of Dick's investigation.

When he reappeared, half-supporting the lost girl on his strong arm, there was indeed astonishment in the little group; but, in an instant, the father had his daughter in his clasp, crying like a child over the recovery of his darling.

Explanations then were brief. All felt the need of getting away from the spot as soon as possible; and, fortunately, had not long to wait, for an excursion train soon came up, bound east, and stopped for water. Aboard this the whole party were permitted to embark—the race across the continent was ended!

The return to New York was finally consummated—Mr. Edwards insisting that all the three detectives should accompany him; and when, at length, they parted, in the Edwards mansion, it was in cheerful mood, for Evelyn had become strong again, and the late unhappy father was in the best of spirits over her entire recovery from the baleful effects of that terrible hypnotic enthrallment.

That Dick was generously rewarded goes without saying; and that Billy and Steele were made happy with a liberal recognition of their services is equally a matter of fact.

Billy was greatly rejoiced, moreover, to learn, as he soon did, that he was not a murderer, for the daring scamp, Jack Heath, was seen shadowing the house only a day or two after Mr. Edwards's return.

This reappearance gave no one any anxiety,

for, now that Mr. Edwards and his daughter knew the true character of the two nephews, there was no likelihood of their ever again darkening his door. If they did come, Inspector Byrnes would give them a most unwelcome reception at Headquarters.

THE END.

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